# THE WORST WITCH

## EPI SODE ONE Shooting Script

Written by

Emma Reeves

Based on the books by Jill Murphy

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2 <u>EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS - DAY 1 09:16</u> (MLDRED)

Another tall building, but a much more prosaic one. A standard housing block. All the floors have windows in exactly the same places. A few floors up, M LDRED HUBBLE is staring out of the kitchen window towards the distant mountain...

CUT TO.

INT. HUBBLE FLAT - DAY 1 09:17 (GIRLS N/S, JULIE, MIDRED)

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M LDRED, dressed in jeans, a long top and unlaced trainers, goes back to the kitchen table.

On the walls of the flat are many unframed pictures drawn by MIdred and her mother. There's a wide range - from pictures in felt tip and crayon to accomplished pencil sketches, a few watercolours. Some of the pictures have MIdred's name and age on them - MIdred aged 5, for example. They mostly depict famous landmarks from around the world - the Taj Mahal, the Tower of Piza, the Pyramids.

At the table, MLDRED is drawing a sketch of the mountain. It's good. You can just see the castle poking out of the

M LDRED No, no. l'II do it.

#### JULIE Thanks, MILIE.

Planting a kiss on M LDRED's for ehead, JULIE heads back to bed. M LDRED gets out a dust pan and brush -

- but drops them on top of the toast-mess as she sees something else out of the window. Another young witch is flying past on a broomstick!

M LDRED rushes to the window - again, the girl's flying off into the distance.

M LDRED can't believe this - what's happening? Is she hallucinating? She has to find out more. She opens the door and heads out onto the balcony. As she goes, on the kitchen table, her sketch of the mountain begins to GLOW MAGI CALLY...

CUT TO:

### 4 <u>EXT. MILDRED'S FLAT, BALCONY - DAY 1 09:18</u> (MAUD, M LDRED)

M LDRED runs out onto the balcony. She stares in the direction she thought the girl was flying - she's already a dot in the distance. M LDRED looks around, wildly - are there any more broomstick riders? -

- and sees MAUD, riding a broomstick, heading straight for her.

M LDRED's mouth is open in shock as MAUD, minus her glasses, CRASH-LANDS on the balcony right next to M LDRED.

M LDRED stares at her in absolute shock. Doesn't know what to say, how to deal with this.

Meanwhile, practical MAUD picks herself up and peers around, looking for her glasses. She sees MLDRED:

MAUD

Sorry! I lost my glasses, couldn't see where I was going...

MAUD peers closely at MLDRED, who's still staring in disbelief.

M LDRED (to herself) It's real...

#### MAUD

You OK?

M LDRED (incoherent with shock) You! - You were -(gestures to the sky) Flying. On a broomstick.

#### Maud

(proud) I know! I passed my Broomstick Proficiency test first time.

M LDRED (still gobsmacked) So are you - Are you a witch?

MAUD Hope so! As long as I can make it in time for the entrance exam

M LDRED Entrance exam?

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MAUD

For Mss Cackle's Academy!

MAUD gestures to the mountain. The castle is visible now.

M LDRED Academy... Like a school... For witches ?

## MAUD

Of course! But I'll never get there without my glasses. You haven't seen them, have you?

M LDRED No. But we can find them Come on!

Before MAUD can object, an eager M LDRED has pushed her through the door and into the flat...

CUT TO.

<u>EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:22</u>5 (MAUD, MILDRED, MRS ROBERTS)DOG

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## 

GIRLS and their PARENTS are arriving on broomsticks. One girl has tiny stabilisers (mini-brooms) attached to her broom Two more are connected to their parents' brooms with guide ropes. One nervous applicant (LUCINDA) is sitting on a cushion tied to the back of her MUM s broomstick.

Other candidates stream in on foot, through the open gates. CHARLOTTE and FELICITY, two pretty It-witches, are already arm in arm, BFFS. BELLA, a foot taller than the other candidates, has her arms folded, assessing the competition. DRUSILLA is alone, looking a bit lonely and needy.

M SS HARDBROOM and M SS CACKLE watch the arrivals. M SS HARDBROOM is dressed from head to toe in black, wears an intimidatingly pointy hat, and radiates disapproval. M SS CACKLE, on the other hand, is plump and motherly-looking, dressed in a skirt and jumper. She's watching the arrivals with an air of happy anticipation.

> M SS CACKLE Here they come. The future of witchcraft.

M SS HARDBROOM (looks at the candidates, gloomy) The new term starts in six weeks. And these are our potential firstformers.

M SS CACKLE (shakes her head, smiles) I've got a good feeling about this year.

M SS HARDBROOM You said that last year. And the year before.

M SS CACKLE Well, true talent is rare -

M SS HARDBROOM Rare? It's practically extinct! Face it Ada, the Craft is in decline. M SS CACKLE Not while I'm Headmistress.

CUT TO:

7 <u>EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:25</u>7 (MAUD, M LDRED)

M LDRED looks around - they're alone.

M LDRED (to MAUD, urgent) What's going on? Why couldn't she see you?

> MAUD the broom

It's just the broomstick. It's got protective spells to shield me from non-magical people -(off MLDRED's shocked expression)

- what?

M LDRED

Im not magical.

MAUD But you can see me -

M LDRED

I know!

MAUD looks at M LDRED - suddenly intrigued and a bit nervous.

MAUD Who are you? M LDRED I'mjust - MIdred. MIdred Hubble... (smiles apologetically) Hi. MAUD Yep. I've been practising... (sad) Ch well. I can try again next year.

M LDRED looks at MAUD - she's so disappointed - and she's M Idred's only link with this amazing new world of witches. M LDRED makes a decision:

> M LDRED No. You're going to get in this year!

#### MAUD

But I can't fly without my c8Bt5 u5 - 0. 188 Tc - 0. 046e594. 96

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#### EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:268 (MAUD, MILDRED N/S)

M LDRED and MAUD are sprinting across the green as fast as they can, holding the broomstick between them

## MAUD

Now. Now!

The two girls jump up and try to perch side-saddle on the broomstick. In her enthusiasm, MLDRED leaps too far and crashes into Maud. They collapse in a heap on the floor, the broomstick hovering patiently above them

MONTAGE as the girls try again and again to mount the broomstick together.

CUT TO.

EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCKa6LF FLnt9 q70 0 hgFkLItAL GREEN - DAYcm n9:27'SBLO

## 10 <u>EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:28</u>0 (MAUD, M LDRED) DOG

MIdred and Maud are trying yet again. Charging towards takeoff at full pelt, one hand each on the broomstick.

## MAUD

Go go go!

Simultaneously, Maud and MIdred hop onto the broomstick, side saddle. Their timing is perfect. The broom begins to rise -

#### M LDRED

Yes! We did it!

M LDRED grabs MAUD's hand in triumph. A moment of elation between the girls at their shared achievement.

MAUD (yells in triumph) Yay!

M LDRED (simultaneous yell of triumph) Woo-hoo!

The girls soar through the estate together, almost crashing into buildings.

MAUD I can't see a thing! Which way? M LDRED Left - left - l said left! MAUD We are going left! M LDRED Ch, OK. (beat) Right. Go right.

MAUD veers right...

MAUD I thought you said you knew the way?

M LDRED I do! I'm just not very good at left and right...

11 <u>EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS (PF) - DAY 1 09:50</u> (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, LUCINDA'S MOTHER N/S, MAUD, M LDRED N/S, M SS BAT, M SS CACKLE, M SS DRILL, M SS GULLET, M SS HARDBROOM, PARENTS N/S, TEACHERS N/S)

M SS HARDBROOM and M SS CACKLE are still watching the candidates arrive. They've been joined by M SS BAT and M SS GULLET. M SS DRILL, the bouncy Games teacher, bounds over.

M SS DRILL (to M SS HARDBROOM) What's up with you, HB? You look like you've lost a cream cake and found a carrot.

M SS HARDBROOM This school needs strong witches. Not little girls who want to play at magic.

M SS BAT peers at her over her thick spectacles.

M SS BAT We were all little girls once, Hecate. Even me.

M SS HARDBROOM

If you say so...

ESMERELDA, wearing a purple sash fringed with gold, ushers a sickly-looking LUCINDA over to them

ESMERELDA

(polite) Excuse me Miss Hardbroom Lucinda has problems with allergies and can't do Potions.

LUCINDA'S MOTHER asks who she should speak to about that.

M SS HARDBROOM Somebody from another school, perhaps.

The MOTHER looks affronted. LUCINDA looks despondent.

M SS CACKLE M ss Gullet.

As MISS GULLET goes to talk to the MOTHER, the other teachers subtly edge away - they don't like her.

M SS GULLET (drones, boring) Health and safety is very important. We can provide antiallergy spells...

The MOTHER looks slightly mollified.

M SS HARDBROOM I truly despair for the future.

M SS CACKLE They'll learn. We all did.

M SS BAT

Event ual I y.

ETHEL HALLOW flies neatly over the school gates and hovers, in perfect control of her broomstick. M SS CACKLE looks at M SS HARDBROOM - see?

M SS HARDBROOM (concedes) Well, maybe there is some

M SS CACKLE (smiles) Well met, Ethel. Welcome to our school. **ESMERELDA** Ethel, this is -ETHEL I know. ETHEL makes the same bow and gesture that MAUD made earlier. ETHEL (CONT'D) Well met, Miss Cackle. Miss Har dbr oom M SS CACKLE Well met. M SS HARDBROOM Two Hallows in one school. (to ETHEL) You have a lot to live up to. ETHEL I'll do my best. M SS CACKLE (reassuring) Of course you will. But there's no need to be intimidated. Nobody expects you to be as clever as Esmer el da. ETHEL's lips curl slightly. **ESMERELDA** Mss Cackle -M SS CACKLE

Don't be modest! (to ETHEL) Esmerelda is the finest student this Academy's ever had. If you're even half as crafty as your sister -

ESMERELDA Look out ! I ncoming!

ESMERELDA dodges out of the way - and so does ETHEL - as M LDRED and MAUD, out of control, zoom over the gates on their overloaded broomstick,

MAUD (in a panic) Look out, the pooooooooooond...

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Too late. The girls crash-land into the school pond.

CUT TO.

### 12 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 09:52</u> (MAUD, M LDRED, M SS HARDBROOM) FROG

M LDRED surfaces from the pond, covered in slimy green pond weed. She spits out the pond water and wipes the muddy water from her eyes and ears.

M LDRED

(looks around) Maud?!

M LDRED's POV: MAUD's head and feet are poking out of the weeds. She's thrashing around wildly:

MAUD (squinting, trying to see without her glasses) Where are you? I can't see a thing!

M LDRED I'll save you!

MLDRED frantically flails towards MAUD...

M SS HARDBROOM appears at the pond bank. M LDRED calls over to her, frantic.

#### M LDRED (CONT'D)

Help!

M SS HARDBROOM (makes no attempt to help) Some believe that a true witch will M SS HARDBROOM (O.S.) You, girl. Stop bothering your intellectual superiors and get out.

M LDRED and MAUD scramble out of the pond - M LDRED helping the visually impaired MAUD. M SS HARDBROOM gives them a filthy look, and makes a magical gesture. An icy WIND blasts from her hand. M LDRED and MAUD shiver, but are suddenly dry.

> M LDRED (amazed, to MAUD) She just magicked us dry!

MAUD nods - gestures "keep quiet". She makes a bow to MISS HARDBROOM

#### Maud

(nervous) Well met...

M SS HARDBROOM looks at MAUD coldly. Doesn't return the bow.

M SS HARDBROOM I am M ss Hardbroom Deputy Headmistress. And you are?

MAUD

Maud Spellbody.

M SS HARDBROOM Ah, yes. I remember your mother. (looks MAUD up and down) Such a shame for her.

M LDRED It was my fault.

M SS HARDBROOM (withering) And who are you?

MILDRED MIldred. MIldred Hubble.

M SS HARDBROOM You're not on my list.

M LDRED doesn't know what to say. MAUD comes to the rescue:

Maud

No. 'Cos she changed her mind. She was down for Pentangle's, but Mum said this school was way better so she should try here first...

MSS HARDBROOM looks sceptical, but MAUD brazens it out.

Ι...

M LDRED tries to reply - but is forced to turn away...

 $\ldots$  and all the other APPLICANTS leap back in disgust as M LDRED retches.

DRUSILLA Urrrgh! Dis-gust-ing!

Feli (1 Ty

Gross.

CHARLOTTE is also grossed out.

MAUD Leave her alone, she's travel sick!

> ETHEL (gesturing to the pond)

 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{ESMERELDA}}$  gestures, and the group VANI SHES -

CUT TO.

ESMERELDA ("shut up") All right, Ethel. (to M LDRED) Magical food's got no nutritional value. Shame - it tastes a lot better than the slop they serve here.

ESMERELDA leads the group on but as the girls follow behind, ETHEL won't let it drop.

ETHEL I can't believe she doesn't know the basic rules! (to M LDRED) Didn't your mother teach you anything about magic?

Before M LDRED can respond, MAUD leaps in:

MAUD Didn't your mother teach you not to be a bossy old hag?

The other girls giggle. ETHEL glares at MAUD.

ESMERELDA ("moving on") Right. Let's take a look at the Potions Lab.

ESMERELDA opens a door, and enters a room, followed by her flock.

As they go in, we see somebody watching them - it's AGATHA, writing in a notebook. We don't see her face.

CUT TO.

15 <u>INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 10:05</u> (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSI LLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL N/S, FELI CI TY N/S, GI RLS N/S, LUCI NDA N/S, MAUD N/S, M LDRED)

The girls enter the POTIONS LAB. It contains a strange mixture of modern scientific apparatus and arcane equipment. Carefully labelled cauldrons bubble away.

M LDRED looks around in excitement and disbelief.

M LDRED Are these all magic spells?

DRUSI LLA What do they do?

#### ESMERELDA

Loads of stuff. The second years were making Invisibility Elixirs last term.. Let's see what they brewed up.

ESMERELDA removes the lid from a cauldron and peers inside. She sticks her finger into the cauldron and licks it. Immediately, she turns an alarming shade of GREEN. She looks at her hand and shakes her head.

> ESMERELDA (CONT'D) Not enough slugs' eggs.

ESMERELDA gestures and returns to her normal colour.

CUT TO.

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## <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY BEDROOM - DAY 1 10:19</u> 16 (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD N/S, MIDRED) BATS

The girls enter A bedroom

ESMERELDA So, this is your typical hutch.

DRUSI LLA (shi veri ng) These are the bedrooms?

ESMERELDA That's right. Only thing colder than the food.

FELICITY This is, like, seriously oldschool.

ESMERELDA Yes, that's kind of our thing.

M LDRED sees some black objects clinging to the windowsill. She stretches her hand out towards them -

- and some BLACK BATS fly into her face. DRUSILLA, FELICITY and CHARLOTTE react girlishly, squealing. LUCINDA covers her face in panic.

> ESMERELDA (CONT'D) Oh, yeah. Don't mind the bats.

> > M LDRED

I don't!

MLDRED's wide-eyed with wonder, taking it all in.

CUT TO:

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, CORRIDOR BY KITTEN ROOM - DAY 1 10:20 (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED)

ESMERELDA escorts the girls down a corridor. Mysterious witchy symbols are chalked on the doors. DRUSILLA points to one with a cat-like symbol.

DRUSILLA What's in there?

ESMERELDA

Kitten room

!

M LDRED

Kittens

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#### ESMERELDA

(nods) Cats are assigned in year one. You work together all the way through the school.

M LDRED We're not allowed pets in our flats.

ETHEL A familiar is not a pet. It's an ancient tool of the Craft.

MAUD makes a "blah, blah, blah" face to MILDRED, who stifles a laugh.

FELICITY Can we see the kittens?

ESMERELDA (looks at her watch) Maybe later. Your exam starts in ten minutes. In the Great Hall. This way...

ESMERELDA heads off, followed by the others, but MLDRED hangs back:

## MAUD

Come on, MIdred.

M LDRED

I can't pass a witch examl I'm not -

MAUD glances around - people will hear...

MAUD

Ssh!

MAUD opens the nearest door - to the KITTEN ROOM -

## MAUD (CONT'D) Let's talk in here.

MAUD drags M LDRED inside. But, at the end of the corridor, a suspicious ETHEL turns back. She looks at the empty corridor - where did M I dred and Maud go?

CUT TO:

## 18 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITTEN ROOM - DAY 1 10:21</u> (ETHEL N/S, MAUD, M LDRED) KITTENS

M LDRED and MAUD take in the kitten room It's covered in cushions. On each one, an individual BLACK KITTEN sits.

MLDRED's blown away by the cuteness.

#### M LDRED

Kittens!

M LDRED can't help herself - she rushes over to play with the kittens. MAUD follows.

MAUD (tempting) If you came here, you'd have a kitten of your own...

M LDRED I wish I could. But just wanting it doesn't make me a witch!

MAUD Bats! You saw me on the broomstick. You must have somemagic in your family.

M LDRED I really haven't. I never knew magic existed until today.

MAUD stares at MLDRED - can't really comprehend.

MAUD You lived your whole life without magic?

M LDRED Yes! Everyone does! Well. I thought they did...

Unseen by M LDRED and MAUD, ETHEL is listening in at the door. She's heard the whole conversation. She looks deeply displeased - and walks off. Deliberately leaving the door open.

MAUD You must have noticed something. You're naturally crafty. Didn't anything ever happen to you that you couldn't explain?

MILDRED (remembering) Well, maybe...

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Unseen by MLDRED and MAUD, a kitten gets up and goes out of the door.

MAUD (to MILDRED) You see? You may as well just try the exam..

M LDRED nods - but is then distracted:

M LDRED (indicating) Was that cushion empty when we came in?

MAUD shakes her head.

MAUD (to MILDRED, turning) Did you shut the -?

She stops - the door's wide open.

M LDRED I thought I did!

MIdred runs out of the door - followed by Maud.

CUT TO.

19 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, CORRIDOR BY KITTEN ROOM - DAY 1 10:23</u> (MAUD, M LDRED)

M LDRED and MAUD look up and down the corridor - no kitten.

MILDRED (panicking) We'velost a kitten!

MAUD Let's think about this. You're a kitten. Where would you go?

M LDRED Where the food is...

MAUD The kitchen!

M LDRED (points) That way!

MAUD (corrects her, points the opposite way) That way...

CUT TO:

20 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITCHEN - DAY 1 10:35</u> 20 (AGATHA, DI NNER WITCHES N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS TAPI OCA) KITTEN

> The DINNER WITCHES are busy preparing food. Chopping vegetables, stirring pans, etc. MILDRED and MAUD creep in. As MILDRED Looks around for the kitten, MAUD is tempted by a plate of sticky buns. She can't help herself, takes a bite but pulls a face, it's not very nice.

The fear some M SS TAPI CCA appears:

M SS TAPIOCA NO GIRLS ALLOWED IN MY KITCHEN!

M LDRED and MAUD quail.

#### M LDRED

l'msorry! -

MAUD

- We were just...

M LDRED

... Looking for a kitten.

Maud

(points) There he is!

The BLACK KITTEN is on a kitchen table, nibbling on a piece of meat.

M LDRED (to the kitten) Here... (beat) Come here. Please...

M LDRED holds out her hands, and the KITTEN walks into her arms.

MAUD Wow Mildred, you're amazing with animals!

M SS TAPLOCA ALL right, you've got it. Now get out!

M SS TAPIOCA picks up the piece of meat the kitten was nibbling, and drops it into a pot of stew.

M LDRED We're going!

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The girls turn to go but their way is blocked by MSS CACKLE (apparently) entering the kitchen. She's now dressed in a sharp business suit and looks smarter and somehow harder. She's intent on surreptitious business, and is displeased to see the girls.

# Maud

# Mss Cackle!

The tiniest moment, then AGATHA decides to play along.

AGATHA Yes. What are you girls doing in here?

But AGATHA's pretence is short-lived:

M SS CACKLE ( O. S. )

Agat ha!

The girls turn to see MSS CACKLE standing in the doorway, dressed in her familiar skirt and jumper. They look back at the other woman in the kitchen (AGATHA). Two identical Mss Cackles. What's going on?

AGATHA is irritated at being caught in the kitchen by her sister, but covers skillfully:

AGATHA (with a formal bow, to M SS CACKLE) Well met, Sister.

M SS CACKLE Well met, Agatha. To what do we owe this unexpected - surprise?

AGATHA

I'm writing a piece about the school. For the Which Witching Academy website. What are you doing in here?

M SS CACKLE

These two girls were missing. (to MLDRED and MAUD) Miss Hardbroom wanted to disqualify you. I had to use a Finding Spell to track you down... And is that one of the school kittens?

#### M LDRED

He escaped.

M SS CACKLE (a beat. Then, briskly) Well. No harm done. M SS CACKLE waves her hand. The KI TTEN disappears.

M SS CACKLE (CONT'D) He's back where he belongs. Now, get along to the exam room (to AGATHA) I'll see you in my office. We'll have a nice little catch-up.

M SS CACKLE pointedly waits for AGATHA to leave before ushering MAUD and M LDRED out of the room

M SS CACKLE (CONT'D) But here's a little tip. Don't think about what's not in the old cauldron. (She taps her head on the word "cauldron") Think about what is.

M LDRED stares at her in incomprehension - then works it out.

M LDRED You mean - focus on what I can do?

M SS CACKLE smiles and taps her head. M LDRED furrows her brow in concentration and picks up her pen...

M SS CACKLE (to M SS HARDBROOM) Take charge, Hecate. I need to speak to my sister.

M SS CACKLE heads out.

Time passes...

22 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 10:45</u> (AGATHA, M SS CACKLE)

M SS CACKLE's office is warm and inviting. Perhaps an ancient telly is evident.

AGATHA and M SS CACKLE are drinking tea. M SS CACKLE tucks into the biscuits, AGATHA does not.

M SS CACKLE You want to write about my school. For a website.

AGATHA

Just the usual stuff. Twenty things you didn't know about Cackle's Academy, number nine will shock you, et cetera.

#### M SS CACKLE

It's been five years. And you suddenly turn up - on Selection Day, of all days.

AGATHA

It's perfect. "Meet the next generation". It's a hot topic. Everyone's concerned about the lack of young talent coming through.

M SS CACKLE Well, they needn't be.

AGATHA

I know you do your best. But you can't do it alone. If we worked together -

M SS CACKLE (meaningful) We tried that before, remember?

AGATHA

I know we made mistakes -

MISS CACKLE looks at her - really?! AGATHA looks down - humble.

AGATHA (CONT'D) I made mistakes. But I've learned from them I swear on my hat -

M SS CACKLE You're not wearing a hat. 22

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GREAT HALL (PF) - DAY 1 12:00 23 (BELLA N'S, CHARLOTTE N'S, DRUSI LLA N'S, ETHEL N'S, FELI CI TY N'S, GI RLS N'S, LUCI NDA N'S, MAUD N'S, M LDRED, M SS CACKLE, M SS DRI LL N'S, M SS GULLET N'S, M SS HARDBROOM)

Later. The SCHOOL BELL tolls with funereal dolour.

# M SS HARDBROOM Time's up, girls. Pens down.

M SS HARDBROOM makes a magical gesture. The girls' pens automatically drop to their desks.

The TEACHERS begin to collect the papers. LUCINDA is in a frenzy of anxiety, her hand shaking. ETHEL smiles confidently as she hands hers to M SS HARDBROOM M SS HARDBROOM smiles rustily back and moves on to M LDRED's desk. M SS HARDBROOM picks up her paper, casually glances at it - can't believe what she's reading.

M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

(finally) Is this some variety of joke ?

M SS HARDBROOM brandishes the paper. It's covered in pictures of the school - everything MIdred's seen that day. The potions Iab, Maud and MIdred on the broomstick, the kittens the teachers - Agatha and Miss Cackle - the other girls. M LDRED

Home -

M SS CACKLE But the selection isn't over yet. There's still the practical test to come.

M LDRED I ooks around. There's no escape...

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INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 13:00 (BELLA N S, CHARLOTTE N S, DRUSI LLA N S, ESMERELDA N S, ÈTHEL, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, M SS BAT N/S, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM)

The candidates are standing in front of cauldrons. A witchy textbook - the Book of Spells - is set by each cauldron. Ingredients are laid out on a central table. The girls are preparing for the exam - checking their notes, mumbling incantations, practising magical handwaves.

> M SS CACKLE Before we begin the Practical Test, Mss Hardbroom has the results of your written papers.

M SS HARDBROOM appears with a huge stack of written papers. She blows on the exam papers. They flutter into the air, as if on tiny wings, and fly to their owners. M LDRED drops hers clumsily on the floor. She picks it up and looks at it despondently. Sure enough, it's written there in big red letters - "1% FALL".

> M SS HARDBROOM Some of your papers were utterly abominable. And those were the better ones.

ETHEL looks pointedly at MLDRED. MLDRED sags, ashamed. The other girls look over curiously.

> M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D) However, there was one chink of light in the howling void. A perfect one hundred percent.

ETHEL st and s up.

M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D) Ethel Hallow, stand up -

She sees that ETHEL is already standing.

M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D) Et hel, you have equal led the school r ecor d.

ETHEL (di sappoi nt ed) Equaled ?

M SS CACKLE Your sister also scored one hundred percent in her written entrance exam

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M SS HARDBROOM And went on to score ninety-eight per cent in the practical.

ETHEL (confident, looks at ESMERELDA) Only ninety-eight?

M SS HARDBROOM gives ETHEL an approving glance - likes her fighting spirit.

M SS CACKLE Candi dat es, choose your spells.

M LDRED looks around. MAUD points to the Book of Spells on her desk. M LDRED flips through it randomly.

M LDRED (whispers to MAUD) Which do I do?

#### MAUD

(whispers back) Just pick an easy spell. Level One. You get more marks for the hard ones, but all we need to do is pass.

M SS CACKLE is by ETHEL's cauldron.

M SS CACKLE

My hat! You're going for a level eight ?

ETHEL

Only because level nine aren't allowed.

#### M SS HARDBROOM

(to ETHEL) You will complete the entire transformation? Including scales and internal combustion?

ETHEL

Why become a dragon if you don't breathe fire?

ESMERELDA gives up. M LDRED has found a spell she likes the look of:

M LDRED Basic lev-it-ation. Level One. "If on flying you've set your mind, then these ingredients you must find..." M LDRED studies the list of ingredients...

Meanwhile, MSS CACKLE is having a private word with MSS HARDBROOM

# M SS HARDBROOM Agatha wants to see me?

M SS CACKLE nods. M SS HARDBROOM purses her lips thoughtfully, but decides not to ask anything further and leaves. M SS CACKLE looks thoughtful.

M LDRED goes over to the central table to collect ingredients.

M LDRED (V.Q) Flower of Common Cattrap... (picks up a large, sinister dried flower) Check. Dried mandrake root... Check. Sliver of bee's brain... urgh, really?...

25 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 13:20</u> (AGATHA, M SS HARDBROOM)

AGATHA is chatting to MISS HARDBROOM Jotting down notes in her notebook.

M SS HARDBROOM

l've never been interviewed for a "web site" before.

AGATHA It's nothing to worry about, Hecate.

M SS HARDBROOM I'm not worried.

AGATHA Well maybe you should be.

M SS HARDBROOM raises an eyebrow - explain!

# AGATHA (CONT'D)

The Craft is in a state of hurlyburly. Fewer and fewer girls are inheriting magical ability. It must be tough, trying to keep standards up.

M SS HARDBROOM You know it is.

#### AGATHA

My sister is very well-intentioned. But perhaps if someone more forceful - were in charge... It might be easier to fight the tide of "dumbing down".

M SS HARDBROOM looks at AGATHA - assessing her, considering her words...

CUT TO.

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26 <u>INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 13:42</u> (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS BAT, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM) WORM

> ETHEL is carefully weighing out pondweed on a set of oldfashioned scales with miniature weights - balancing carefully.

M LDRED grinds her ingredients with a pestle and mortar and places them into her cauldron. She takes a jug and pours in the contents: ETHEL (dramatic) MAUD Uh - Mildred?

MAUD glances down. M LDRED follows her glance - and realises, to her delight, that she's floating off the ground.

M LDRED It worked! I'm - I'm flying. Well, floating...

MAUD (delighted) We did it!

The tall MAUD and the floating MLDRED manage an awkward hug - which is soon interrupted as MSS HARDBROOM enters:

M SS HARDBROOM All right, that's enough.

With a dismissive flick of her fingers, she sends MLDRED to the ground and restores MAUD to her normal size.

M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D) (to M LDRED) Not a bad effort.

M LDRED beams, but M SS HARDBROOM's focus, along with everyone else's, is now on ETHEL, who has finished her level 8 potion. ETHEL relishes the focus as she lifts a spoon to her lips:

> ESMERELDA Good Luck, Et hy.

ETHEL I won't need it.

ETHEL drinks the potion. Everyone watches, tense.

ETHEL (CONT'D) (quiet) It's happening... I can feel it... (Her posture becomes dragon-like. She shapes her fingers into claws) Dragon fire in my belly. Dragon blood in my veins. I -- I want to - I need to -Rrrrrraaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrggggghh!

ETHEL lets out a dragon-like roar. Everyone is suitably impressed, except MAUD, who rolls her eyes. The girls and staff back away, anticipating ETHEL's dragon transformation -

- but instead, she vanishes...

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A moment of utter bewilderment. Everyone looks at each other. Even MISS HARDBROOM looks somewhat concerned.

> M LDRED (sotto, to MAUD) Where'd she go?

A worried ESMERELDA has rushed to the place where ETHEL stood, and is peering at something almost invisible on the ground:

## ESMERELDA

Et hy?!

ESMERELDA bends down and carefully picks something up. The crowd parts to allow M SS CACKLE through.

ESMERELDA (CONT'D)

(concerned) Mss Cackle...

ESMERELDA hands the thing she's holding to M SS CACKLE, who peers at it in her hand. It's a tiny, wriggling WORM

ESMERELDA (CONT'D) Is that her?

M SS CACKLE

Oh dear, l'mafraid it must be.

The WORM makes a tiny, shrill sound - as if it's very angry and ranting about something - but its helium voiced words are indecipherable. M LDRED and MAUD try desperately to suppress their laughter.

> M SS BAT (peering through her ancient spectacles) What is it?

> > M SS HARDBROOM

Lumbricus terrestris. A distant and rather vulgar relation of the noble dragon.

M SS CACKLE

(cheerful, to the worm) Bad luck. Well, it's a common beginner's error. Let's get you back on your feet, shall we?

M SS CACKLE puts the worm on the floor. It's still making angry chirping sounds as it magically transforms back into ETHEL -

> ETHEL (mid-rant) - it's sabotage, that's what it is! (MORE)

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ETHEL (CONT'D)

Someone messed with my potion! I demand an enquiry!

M SS HARDBROOM There's no mystery about it. I've seen this many times before. You simply didn't add enough pondweed.

M LDRED has a horrible moment of realisation...

#### ETHEL

I did! I measured out the exact amount!

M LDRED She's right. (beat) It was me. I did it.

Everyone turns to stare at MLDRED - she's in big trouble now...

# 27 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY ONE 14.00</u> (ETHEL, MAUD, M LDRED, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM)

M LDRED faces the wrath of ETHEL and the teachers:

# ETHEL

She deliberately wrecked my spell!

# M LDRED

No! It was a mistake -

ETHEL

She shouldn't even be here! She's not even from a witching family!ke -

ETHEL (disgusted, as if it's a dirty word) A pass...

A µass...

M SS CACKLE

(to MIdred) And you... You really have no craft in your family at all?

# M LDRED

(shakes her head) But my potion worked! I actually flew!

M SS HARDBROOM You interfered with another witch in the course of lawful spellcasting. In direct violation of the Witches' Code.

ETHEL (smug, at MILDRED) That's an automatic fail.

M SS HARDBROOM (To M LDRED) Nought per cent.

M LDRED's gutted. MAUD is gutted for her.

M LDRED Nought per cent?

ETHEL

At least it makes your written result look good.

MAUD

That's not fair!

M SS HARDBROOM Are you questioning the Code?

A moment. Maud can't quite believe she's doing this, but:

# MAUD

(bravely) Yes! MIdred's family may not be magical, but she is! You can't turn her down just because of one mistake!

M SS CACKLE I know it seems harsh. But the Code was established for a reason. Witches work with the fundamental forces of nature. (MORE)

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M SS CACKLE (CONT'D) Our magic must be used with utmost caution. (to M LDRED) I'm afraid that a real witch would know that.

28 <u>INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 14:30</u> (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSI LLA N/S, ETHEL N/S, FELICI TY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCI NDA N/S, MAUD, M LDRED, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM)

> The successful candidates (including ETHEL, DRUSILLA, CHARLOTTE, FELICITY, BELLA and LUCINDA) are celebrating their acceptance, while a crestfallen group of failed candidates are directed out by M SS HARDBROOM

> > M SS CACKLE (beaming) Congratulations to our new First Years! You've all done splendidly. I shall see you all later, for our celebratory feast.

M SS HARDBROOM Failed applicants, this way. Your parents and guardians will collect you.

M LDRED and MAUD realise that this is goodbye.

M LDRED (to MAUD) I'm glad you got in, anyway.

MAUD I just wish you were coming too.

M LDRED I really let you down.

MAUD

No you didn't!

MAUD hugs M LDRED. There are tears in both girls' eyes.

Suddenly, both M LDRED and MAUD jump as M SS HARDBROOM appears out of nowhere:

M SS HARDBROOM MIdred Hubble! Are you still here?

M LDRED

(with great dignity) I was just leaving, Miss Hardbroom

M LDRED lifts her chin defiantly as she bravely walks through the doors, out of the Potions Lab...

... and swiftly turns around and sidles back in.

M LDRED (CONT'D) Um, which way do I go....?

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MSSHARDBROOM looks at MLDRED, impatient.

30 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:32</u> (AGATHA, M LDRED)

> M LDRED walks down a seemingly unending corridor. It's dark and gloomy. There are no windows. A GLOW at the far end comes from a lantern in a holder on the wall. M LDRED hurries towards it -

- but as she gets there, it splutters out.

M LDRED looks around in despair. The corridor stretches in front of her and behind, equally dark and forbidding both ways. Which way to go? M LDRED bravely takes a step forward -

- and freezes as she hears a RUSTLING SOUND in the dark.

# M LDRED

Hello?

M LDRED waits, but hears nothing except the echo of her own voice down the corridor.

She decides to set off in the opposite direction, turns -

- and bumps right into a dark shape...

M LDRED (CONT'D)

Aaaar r ggh!

M LDRED

(miserable)

I should have known I'd never get in.

AGATHA

(kind) You had a dream, and you followed it. You did your very best...

M LDRED nods, fighting back tears.

AGATHA (CONT'D) (honeyed tones) What a shame you failed. And in such a dreadfully humiliating manner.

AGATHA lets go of MLDRED's chin. MLDRED's losing her battle. A tear rolls down her cheek. AGATHA thoughtfully passes her a handkerchief. MLDRED wipes her tears.

> AGATHA (CONT'D) Poor Maud is so disappointed... But I know you didn't meanto let her down...

M LDRED sobs into the handkerchief. AGATHA pats her on the back, making soothing noises:

AGATHA (CONT'D) There, there. It's all right... Let it all out...

Through her tears, M LDRED senses something's wrong. She looks curiously at AGATHA - and follows AGATHA's gaze to the now tear-soaked handkerchief. M LDRED stops crying. AGATHA's behaviour is really weird... M LDRED looks at the handkerchief. It's initialled - " AGATHA stuffs the handkerchief into her pocket, makes a magical hand gesture and rushes off.

M LDRED But - I -

But AGATHA's gone. M LDRED's on her own.

A lantern further down the corridor LIGHTS UP. M LDRED walks towards it. As she passes, it goes out and the next lantern lights.

# 31 <u>INT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:33</u> 31 (M LDRED N/S)

M LDRED turns the corner. Hesitates. The next light is in front of her, leading the way out. She's tempted to follow it -

- but she's too curious about Agatha. After a brief pause, M LDRED gathers her courage and heads back the way she came - into the darkness...

# 33 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, CORRIDOR NEAR KITCHENS - DAY 1 14:35</u> (MLDRED N S)

M LDRED turns into a corridor with a light at the end of it. Carefully, she moves towards the light...

34 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITCHEN - DAY 1 14:36</u> 34 (AGATHA, DINNER WITCH, DINNER WITCHES N/S, M LDRED N/S, M SS TAPI OCA)

M SS TAPIOCA is stirring a giant cauldron of broth. She's surprised to see AGATHA:

M SS TAPI OCA (respectful) M ss Cackle!

AGATHA M ss Tapi oca! (to the DI NNER WITCHES) The successful candidates are ready for the feast. You'd better lay the tables.

DINNER WITCH Yes, Miss Cacklie.

The DINNER WITCHES leave, but MISS TAPIOCA stays, stirring the cauldron.

AGATHA Do you mind if I...?

AGATHA takes the spoon from MISS TAPIOCA and helps herself to a spoonful of broth. She almost gags (it's disgusting) but recovers:

> AGATHA (CONT'D) Mmm, delicious!

M SS TAPI CCA Thank you, M ss Cackle.

AGATHA ... Just needs a teeny-tiny bit more ground snail shell to make it even more yummy.

M SS TAPI OCA I've been using this recipe for thirty years -

AGATHA just can't help asserting her (fake) authority:

AGATHA WhosHeadmistress?

M SS TAPI CCA Ground snail shell, you say... M SS TAPIOCA goes to a deep cupboard and reaches into the back of it. AGATHA quickly pushes her in and does a magical gesture to make the cupboard door turn into a blank wall.

Unseen by Agatha, MIdred is watching from the shadows. Her eyes widen in fear.

AGATHA makes a magical gesture. Her outfit changes to her original attire.

AGATHA That's better. My sister has no taste in soup or clothes.

M SS TAPI OCA bangs on the door.

# M SS TAPI CCA

Let me out!

#### AGATHA

Ch, hush.

AGATHA makes a magical gesture and the noise from the cupboard stops. AGATHA produces a small parcel of spell ingredients from her pocket and heads to the soup cauldron. She drops ingredients in one by one. The mixture foams in a sinister manner. AGATHA watches in satisfaction.

> AGATHA (CONT'D) Nettles picked by full moon's beam Scum skimmed from a stagnant stream, Mandrake root, hear it scream..

An unearthly screaming sound as the mandrake root is stirred into the potion. AGATHA holds the handkerchief over the cauldron:

> AGATHA (CONT'D) ... And tears of the child who lost

her dream

Agatha wrings the handkerchief into the cauldron. A few drops of tears fall out. The mixture changes colour.

Meanwhile, M LDRED quietly backs out of the kitchen...

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 $\begin{array}{cccccccc} \underline{INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 14:41} & 36 \\ \hline (BELLA N'S, CHARLOTTE N'S, DINNER WITCHES N'S, DRUSILLA N'S, \\ ESMERELDA N'S, ETHEL N'S, FELICITY N'S, GIRLS N'S, LUCINDA \\ N'S, MAUD, M LDRED, M SS BAT N'S, M SS CACKLE, M SS DRILL \\ N'S, M SS GULLET N'S, M SS HARDBROOM, TEACHERS N'S) PENDLE \\ \end{array}$ 

The DINNER WITCHES are laying the tables. The successful candidates, along with staff and a few pupils, are listening respectfully as MISS CACKLE makes a speech, her familiar BLACK CAT, PENDLE, at her side:

M SS CACKLE ... We have never been a fee-paying school. We believe that every witch deserves a free education. However, if any of your parents would like to support us with a small donation - or indeed an extremely large one -

MLDRED bursts in through the main doors.

M LDRED (panting) MissCackle !

M SS HARDBROOM is suddenly at M LDRED's side:

M SS HARDBROOM M ss Cackle is speaking -

M LDRED Please! You have to listen -

M SS HARDBROOM

Notnow !

M LDRED Yes, now! You're all in danger!

MAUD (getting up) MIldred! What's wrong?

M SS HARDBROOM Sit down, Maud! (to M LDRED) As for you, I have had quite enough of your lies -

M LDRED But it's true!

M SS HARDBROOM - Time to leave - MSS HARDBROOM makes a magical gesture...

# 37 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY MAIN ENTRANCE (PF) - DAY 1 14:42</u> 37 (M LDRED) 37

... and suddenly, MLDRED is outside the school.

#### M LDRED (still shouting) But Agatha -

M LDRED realises she's moved. She blinks, getting her bearings - then remembers the danger. She runs up to the main door and tries to open it - it's locked. She bangs on the door:

> M LDRED (CONT'D) M ss Hardbroom M ss Cackle! Maud!

There's no reply. M LDRED stares at the heavy door - there's nothing she can do now. She turns away...

CUT TO:

#### 38 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 14:43</u> ( M LDRED) FROG

... At a loss, M LDRED wanders through the school grounds and finds herself back by the pond.

M LDRED (thoughtful, thinking it through with an unseen companion) Whatever Agatha's got planned, they deserve it. They're just a bunch of evil old witches...

M LDRED turns to the person she's talking to - it's the FROG from before...

#### FROG

Croak!

M LDRED I tried to save them They wouldn't listen. Not like there's anything l can do anyway...

#### FROG

Croak!

The FROG hops off. MLDRED follows him - he hops to an oddlooking flower, like a particularly large and vicious-looking Venus Flytrap. MLDRED recognises it:

> M LDRED The Common Cattrap flower! From the levitation spell...

FROG ( encour agi ng) Cr oak!

M LDRED But I can't do magic! And we don't even have a caul dron -

# FROG

Croak!

The FROG hops to a plant pot. He looks up at MLDRED hopefully. MLDRED hesitates - glances up at the school, sees an open window...

CUT TO:

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 $\begin{array}{ccccccc} \underline{INT. \ CACKLE'S \ ACADEMY \ DI NI NG \ ROOM \ (PF) \ - \ DAY \ 1 \ 15.00 \\ \hline (AGATHA \ N'S, BELLA \ N'S, CHARLOTTE \ N'S, DI NNER \ W'TCHES \ N'S, DRUSI LLA \ N'S, ESMERELDA \ N'S, ETHEL \ N'S, FELI \ CI \ TY \ N'S, GI \ RLS \ N'S, LUCI \ NDA \ N'S, MAUD \ N'S, M \ SS \ BAT, M \ SS \ CACKLE, M \ SS \ DRI \ LL \ N'S, M \ SS \ GULLET \ N'S, M \ SS \ HARDBROOM, TEACHERS \ N'S) \ PENDLE \\ \end{array}$ 

The girls are still listening politely as MSS CACKLE talks. She's been talking for a while. PENDLE is curled up, asleep. MSS HARDBROOM is motionless, apparently gripped. MSS DRILL fidgets, bored and hungry. MSS BAT is asleep, snoring.

> M SS CACKLE ... And so, as Cackles' girls, you will be carrying on our traditions as your mothers and grandmothers did before you.

The DINNER WITCHES carry in a great cauldron of broth, and a vast basket of bread. MAUD brightens and looks hungrily at the food. MISS HARDBROOM gives her a reproving glance.

M SS HARDBROOM Nobody may eat until M ss Cackle has been served.

MAUD slumps, disappointed. So does M SS DRILL - also hungry.

M SS CACKLE Not to mention your greatgrandmothers. And your great-great grandmothers...

The smell of the soup has made everyone hungry. The girls look longingly at the food. MISS BAT wakes with a start, sniffing the air.

> M SS BAT (waking) Is it dinner time?

Mss Cackle's CAT also stirs at the smell of the food.

M SS CACKLE

Finally, even MISS CACKLE notices the smell. She sniffs the air - suddenly hungry.

#### 40 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 15.01</u> ( M LDRED) FROG

M LDRED wades out of the pond carrying some pondweed, which she adds to the concoction in her plantpot-cauldron. She stirs it. It becomes purple.

#### M LDRED (to the frog) Does that look right to you?

## FROG

Croak!

M LDRED looks dubiously at her improvised potion, and at the upper window of the school.

# M LDRED

Wish me luck!

M LDRED cups her hands, fills them with the potion and drinks. Closes her eyes. Opens them again. She's still standing on the ground.

#### M LDRED (CONT'D) Well, I tried - aaargh!

Suddenly M LDRED whooshes into the sky as if blown by a gale very different from her earlier controlled levitation. She's tumbling through the sky, fighting to stay upright.

> M LDRED (CONT'D) (yells) Aaaaarrrggghh!

> > CUT TO.

41 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.02</u> 41 (AGATHA N/S, BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DINNER WITCHES N/S, DRUSI LLA N/S, ESMERELDA N/S, ETHEL N/S, FELI CI TY N/S, GI RLS N/S, LUCI NDA N/S, MAUD N/S, M/SS BAT N/S, M/SS CACKLE N/S, M/SS DRI LL N/S, M/SS GULLET N/S, M/SS HARDBROOM N/S, TEACHERS N/S) PENDLE

The DINNER WITCHES are still ladling soup into bowls. AGATHA watches, tense, as a bowl is taken to her sister's table.

42 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY SCHOOL WALLS (PF) - DAY 1 15.03</u> 42 (M LDRED N S)

> M LDRED is holding onto a window ledge, desperately trying to stop herself from floating away. She looks through the window and panics.

> > CUT TO:

43 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.04</u> 43 (AGATHA, BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, M LDRED, M SS BAT, M SS CACKLE, M SS DRILL, M SS GULLET, M SS GULLET N/S, M SS HARDBROOM, TEACHERS N/S) PENDLE

M SS CACKLE picks up her spoon. AGATHA watches from her secret vantage point, a gleam of triumph in her eyes...

... as suddenly, a window is flung open and M LDRED flies in. She crashes onto M SS CACKLE's table. Cutlery and bread are thrown everywhere. M SS CACKLE's bowl of soup is spilled.

Everyone looks at MLDRED. Even the girls don't dare to laugh. A moment of silence, broken by MLDRED:

M LDRED (scrambling to her feet) I had to warn you. She put a spell on the soup!

#### M SS CACKLE

Who did?

AGATHA steps forward. Reactions - nobody realised she was there until now.

#### AGATHA

I did.

M SS CACKLE looks at her sister calmly - very disappointed but not really surprised.

#### M SS CACKLE

Why?

AGATHA Because I should be Headmistress here! (to all the staff and students) You know it makes sense. If you want this school to be great again, stand up and follow me!

Nobody moves for a moment - and then, M SS DRILL gets to her feet. She's quite unlike her usual bouncy self. She's glassy-eyed, in a trance.

M SS DRILL (responding to AGATHA's order) Agatha is our leader. She's the greatest witch who ever lived.

#### M SS HARDBROOM M ss Drill!

M SS GULLET waves a hand, and a magical aura appears around M SS DRILL. M SS GULLET examines it.

M SS GULLET She's under the influence of a Total Obedience Spell. (somewhat impressed) A very powerful one, too.

M SS HARDBROOM Which means she'll be loyal to the first person who gave her orders... How did this happen?

MAUD realises and leaps to her feet:

MAUD Because she tried the soup! Just like MIdred said!

A loud REACTION from all the staff and girls as they realise that MLDRED's right. They stare in horror at AGATHA.

> AGATHA (quickly) I invoke Section Seven of the Witches' Code.

M SS CACKLE Yes, I thought you might.

AGATHA lifts her hands and hurls a spell at MISS CACKLE -

- Some of the GIRLS scream and cower.

- but MSS CACKLE neatly parries AGATHA's spell with a neutralising spell. The spells meet in the middle and explode with a smoke and crackle like a rather limp firework.

> M SS BAT Girls, with me!

The GIRLS rush to MISS BAT.

M SS BAT (CONT'D) I'll teach you a protective chant.

AGATHA raises her arm again. So does M SS CACKLE.

M SS HARDBROOM (snaps, to M SS BAT) There's no time for that. Just look after them

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M SS BAT sighs, adjusts her spectacles and gestures. A magical shimmering curtain descends, protecting the staff and girls on the side of the room from the sisterly fight in the middle. Only M SS HARDBROOM and M LDRED remain outside the curtain as M SS CACKLE and AGATHA hurl spells at each other.

M SS CACKLE I really don't want to hurt you, Agatha -

AGATHA And you won't. Because I'm your sister. And you're weak.

M SS CACKLE Don't confuse kindness with weakness.

M SS CACKLE steps neatly out of the way as AGATHA sends a flash of magical lightning which incinerates a chair behind her - and nearly hits M LDRED.

Mss Cackle's cat PENDLE mews in alarm Its hair stands on end.

M SS HARDBROOM MIdred Hubble! Come here, you wretched girl!

M SS HARDBROOM grabs M LDRED and pushes her towards the magical barrier.

ESMERELDA looks deeply concerned. Most of the girls look terrified - but ETHEL seems almost excited:

ETHEL Fascinating. I've never seen a Section Seven before.

M LDRED What's a Section Seven?

ESMERELDA A magical duel between witches. The loser will forfeit their powers...

M SS GULLET is watching the duel with interest - ready to join the winning side.

To the terror of the watching girls, and the concern of the watching staff, AGATHA throws spell after spell at MSS CACKLE, who's constantly forced to dodge and parry.

AGATHA

(as she throws spells) You've always been weak. Mother only gave you the school because you're thirteen minutes older.

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#### M SS CACKLE Those thirteen minutes have saved this school from disaster.

AGATHA waves her hands in a magical gesture. She's created a cage of magical lines which are pushing MISS CACKLE back into a corner...

The vast DINING TABLE flies into the air -

M LDRED

Please. Don't hurt her. This is all my fault. I'm sorry I spoiled your plans.

AGATHA (smiles kindly) That's all right, dear -(grabs MIdred) - you've just put them right back on track!

M SS CACKLE

(sad) Ch, MIdred...

Shocked MURMURINGS amongst the girls and staff.

M SS BAT (shocked) Hecate Hardbroom After all Ada did for you!

M SS HARDBROOM She was a satisfactory Headmistress. (to AGATHA) But you were right. We need a strong leader who will promote higher standards.

General dismay amongst the staff and girls at MISS HARDBROOM s betrayal. ESMERELDA steps forward to protest.

> ESMERELDA M ss Cackle was strong!

M SS HARDBROOM (glances at the snail) Not strong enough, it seems.

M LDRED But she only lost because of me!

MAUD And Agatha's really evil!

# M SS HARDBROOM

(reproving, to MAUD) That is not for us to judge. No witch can interfere in a Section Seven Duel. For, once accepted at this schoo I, you are bound by the Witches' Code.

M SS HARDBROOM makes eye contact with M LDRED. M LDRED tries to work out why... PENDLE mews in distress. M LDRED goes over and comforts him

> AGATHA Miss Hardbroom I knew I could depend on you.

M SS HARDBROOM No member of staff - or any pupil will raise their hand against you. (getting desperate now. At M SS HARDBRswt50.205 Tc 0.09 Tw (2s-0.202 Tc 0.038 T M SS HARDBROOM (CONT'D) Perhaps, Agatha, you would like to take possession of the keys to I will help you, Mistress Mildred. What should I do?

M LDRED

What?

MAUD

44 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:20</u> (JULIE, M LDRED, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM N/S)

#### M LDRED So - what will happen to Agatha?

# M SS CACKLE

(grave) I've confiscated her magical knowledge and ability. As for you, I think we should summon your parent or guardian.

M SS CACKLE waves her arm JULIE appears, wearing rubber gloves, with a toilet brush in her hand.

#### M LDRED

Murd

JULIE (very confused) MIdred!?

Suddenly, she's overcome by a wave of dizziness and nausea. M LDRED rushes to help her stand up.

M LDRED (explains with the air of an expert) It's OK, it's just the Transference Spell, it does that at first. You'll be fine in a minute...

JULIE looks at MILDRED - what? Then she takes in her surroundings for the first time.

JULIE I - I was just cleaning the toilet...

45 <u>INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.29</u> (AGATHA, M SS BAT, M SS DRILL, M SS GULLET)

The soup-stained AGATHA is guarded by a stern-looking BAT, DRILL and GULLET, all with folded arms and stern expressions.

#### M SS BAT

Agatha Cackle, you were always a bad girl. But you've gone too far this time.

#### AGATHA

I was trying to save this school from mediocrity.

M SS GULLET You put us all in danger! You violated every health and safety regulation.

M SS DRILL And you've put me off soup for life.

M SS BAT

46 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:30</u> (JULIE, M LDRED, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM)

JULI E

JULIE is still stunned, trying to get her head around what she's been told.

Magic... Is real. M SS CACKLE That is correct. JULIE I can't... I just can't... [believe it] JULIE trails off, at a loss for words. M LDRED (qui et l y) It's OK, Mum M SS HARDBROOM (to JULIE) If you need more proof, I will happily turn you into a pumpkin. M SS CACKLE (warning, to MSS HARDBROOM Hecate. JULIE (to M SS CACKLE)

So youre magic... The teachers are all magic... And the girls learn magic...?

M SS HARDBROOM I see where MIdred gets her quick wits, Mistress Hubble.

JULIE (turns, sharp) All right, Mrs Pointy Hat. You think you're so much better than me, how about conjuring up some manners? (beat) And it's Ms Hubble.

M SS HARDBROOM is momentarily silenced. Nobody ever speaks to her like that... M SS CACKLE stifles a smile.

M SS CACKLE (to JULIE) Did you even realise that MIdred had applied for a place here?

MLDRED looks down, guilty.

JULIE No. I never imagined... Can we talk in private?

## M SS CACKLE

Of course.

M SS CACKLE makes a magical gesture. M LDRED and JULIE disappear...

CUT TO.

47 <u>EXT. CACKLE' S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 15:35</u> (JULI E, M LDRED)

> JULIE (not angry, genuinely questioning) Why would you do this? Without even asking?

M LDRED I didn't mean to. It just sort of happened.

JULIE There's St. Joseph's school down the road. They've just put in a new computer lab.

MILDRED But they haven't got magic. Or Maud...

JULIE How would you even get here every day? There's no buses up the mountain.

#### M LDRED

No... (beat) It's a boarding school.

JULIE You'd stay here?

M LDRED Just in the term times...

JULIE can't hide her emotion. M LDRED feels terrible.

M LDRED (CONT'D) Sorry, Mum This was a stupid idea. I'll come home and go to St. Joseph's - whatever you want -

JULIE hugs M LDRED.

JULIE All I want is for you to be happy. Do you think you'll be happy here?

M LDRED I don't know... But I think I have to try. If they'll let me... 47

JULIE If they'll let you? You saved their whole school!

M LDRED I did, didn't I?

# JULI E

(nods) Just you remember that. They're lucky to have you. And so am I.

JULIE hugs MILDRED. A loving mother-daughter moment. ( n

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<u>INT. HALLWAY/NOOK BY STAIRCASE - DAY 1 15:40</u> (BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ETHEL, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, M LDRED)

The girls are huddled in the nook by the stairs:

MAUD They've been ages. What's going on?

FELICITY I bet they're going to let her in.

ETHEL Bats! If they do, I'm dropping out.

MAUD Can we get that in writing?

M LDRED enters.

MAUD (CONT'D) What did they say?

M LDRED (still processing everything that's happened) I'min...

MAUD (squeals) Yay!

ETHEL, overhearing, looks furious. DRUSILLA loyally scowls. But FELICITY, CHARLOTTE, BELLA and LUCINDA applaud -M LDRED's the saviour of the school, after all.

> M LDRED But just on a trial basis.

MAUD hugs M LDRED. They jump up and down, CHEERING.

ETHEL

I wouldn't bother getting too friendly. I've got a feeling it's going to be a very short trial...

ETHEL and DRUSILLA laugh meanly.

MAUD Oh, shut up, Worm-Face. Come on Milie.

And MLDRED and MAUD walk off, armin arm

CUT TO.

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49 <u>INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:45</u> (JULIE, M SS CACKLE, M SS HARDBROOM)

M SS CACKLE hands JULIE a pile of papers:

M SS CACKLE Prospectus. Reading list. Uniform requirements.

JULIE (scanning the uniform list) What a lot of black.

M SS HARDBROOM Witches don't really do pink. Shall I transport you home?

JULIE That's very kind -(realises) Oh no, but not -

M SS HARDBROOM waves her fingers and JULIE disappears.

M SS HARDBROOM (to M SS CACKLE) Still got a good feeling about this year?

M SS CACKLE considers - it's been quite a day...

CUT TO.

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#### 50 EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 16.00 (MAUD, M LDRED) FROG

M LDRED and MAUD are running as fast as they can on the grass by the pond, "warming up" the broomstick.

# MAUD

Go!

The two girls jump together, perfectly synchronised. They land on the broomstick and start climbing shakily into the sky.

> M LDRED (yells out, to the school in general) See you on the first day of term

# FROG

Croak!

M LDRED and MAUD fly, awkwardly, up and over the school fence, and away from Cackle's Academy - for now.

END OF EPI SODE