

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

By J.K. Rowling

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"I'm going to keep going until I succeed — or die. Don't think I don't know how this might end. I've known it for years." — Harry Potter

Most 17-year-olds don't view the possibility of an early death as being, well, *possible*. But then again, most seventeen-year olds haven't come face-to-face with death almost half a dozen times before their first kiss either.

In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the seventh and final installment of the ridiculously popular Harry Potter series, J.K. Rowling brilliantly ties up every loose end that she has planted over the last ten years since the very first outing of the series was published in 1997. Truly, Rowling has learned exactly what her fans want and subsequently delivers a book that answers every Potterhead's questions — and then some.

Not only does *Deathly Hallows* revisit key places and characters from all of the previous six books, but Rowling even manages to make clever references to previous bits of dialogue from her earlier books. Case in point: near the end of the first Potter book, after Hermione fails to see the magical solution to saving the trio from a nasty patch of Devil's Snare, Harry's best mate Ron bellows, "HAVE YOU GONE MAD? ARE YOU A WITCH OR NOT?" Now, six years later, Hermione finally gets her revenge on her red-headed friend when Ron believes that all is lost until Hermione yells to him "*Are you a wizard, or what?*" thus reminding Ron to use his wand to solve their problem. Subtle references such as this are a large part of what makes Rowling's books so enjoyable to re-read as there are always deeper meanings and additional allusions that are often only discovered via multiple read-throughs.

Harry's bold statement regarding his own potential death is also a prime example of how much Rowling truly wrote Harry's last tale for her long-time fans. This line seems to read as a secret "shout-out" to the Potterites who have also known for years that the series might not end happily ever after. The prophecy in the fifth book revealed that "neither shall live while the other survives", and therefore by the end of book seven either Harry or Voldemort had to die. Rowling cleverly fills her last installment with so many twists, turns and complications, however, that it becomes practically impossible to determine which way this book is going to end.

More than any of the other Potter books, *Deathly Hallows* is a true quest narrative, with the trio spending the majority of the story hunting for horcruxes and hallows whilst evading capture by Voldemort's Death Eaters. The multiple close-calls that all three main characters

find themselves in throughout the book add to the tension that continues to build until the predictably bloody battle at the end of the tale. The book does, after all, chronicle a brutal war, so be prepared for a lot of killing and, consequently, a lot of tears.

This is not to say that *Deathly Hallows* doesn't offer up a great deal of laughs as well. The hilarious twins Fred and George Weasley make several appearances to ensure that the book isn't all doom and gloom. By far, the funniest part of the story is the secret radio show *Potterwatch*, anonymously hosted by former Hogwarts Quidditch commentator Lee Jordan with special appearances from Fred, George, and ex-Defence Against the Dark Arts professor Remus Lupin. Rowling perfectly mixes this blend of humour, tragedy and adventure so that her epic novel never lags or drags.

To write a 608 page book that millions of die-hard fans around the world are able to devour in less than 24 hours is no mean feat, but Rowling's farewell to the Boy Who Lived is an incredibly gripping page-turner that will leave all Potter lovers immensely satisfied.