

THE WORST WITCH

EPISODE ONE

Shooting Script

Written by

Emma Reeves

Based on the books by Jill Murphy

8th April 2016

Copyright: BBC

1

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY 1 09:15

1

(GIRLS N/S, MISS HARDBROOM N/S, TEACHERS N/S)

A high, forbidding peak, stretching up to the clouds and beyond. Its top is shrouded in mist...

Travelling up and through the mist, a castle is revealed, perched on the summit. Hewn from rough stone, it looks ancient, rather as if it's grown from the mountain itself. Turrets, battlements, narrow arrow-slit windows, impenetrable walls - this timeless place is forbidding, ramshackle but nonetheless imposing.

A shadowy figure flits into view, flying towards the castle. It's a WITCH on a broomstick (MISS HARDBROOM, looking suitably forbidding). Other teachers (in witches' hats) fly in, followed by girls on broomsticks...

Pulling back fast from the castle, and looking through the mist, we can make out several flying figures. But from this distance, it's hard to be sure that they're witches at all. They could be birds, or bats...

CUT TO:

2

EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS - DAY 1 09:16

2

(MILDRED)

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, MILDRED HUBBLE is staring out of the kitchen window towards the distant mountain...

CUT TO:

3

INT. HUBBLE FLAT - DAY 1 09:17

3

(GIRLS N/S, JULIE, MILDRED)

MILDRED, 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 Mildred 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 Mildred's name and age on them - Mildred 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, MILDRED is drawing a sketch of the mountain. It's good. You can just see the castle poking out of the clouds. MILDRED adds a tiny stick-figure of a witch on a broomstick...

POP! Toast pops out of the toaster. MILDRED grabs it, butters it clumsily, and adds jam with the same knife - leaving a trail of jam across the counter. She puts the toast on a tray next to a steaming cup of tea. She picks up the tray and begins to carry it out -

- but as she passes the window, something catches her eye.

MILDRED stares in shock out of the kitchen window. We follow her gaze...

A young WITCH on a broomstick flies past the tower block!

CRASH! MILDRED drops the tray. Tea, jam and toast all over the floor.

JULIE (O.S.)

Mildred?

MILDRED runs to the window. She can just about make out the young witch, flying off into the distance...

JULIE (CONT'D)

Mildred!

MILDRED turns to see her mother, JULIE, dressed in dressing gown and slippers. Concerned.

MILDRED

Mum... You're up.

JULIE

Are you OK?

MILDRED

I - yes. No... I saw...

MILDRED looks out of the window. JULIE follows her gaze. They can see the mountain, but the top is shrouded in mist - no sign of any castle or witches.

MILDRED (CONT'D)
... I thought I saw...

JULIE
... What?

MILDRED
... Nothing.
(glances at the mess on
the floor)
Sorry.

JULIE glances at the mess - touched.

JULIE
You were making me breakfast in
bed.

MILDRED
You've been on lates all week... I
thought it'd be a nice surprise.

JULIE
Come here, you.

MILDRED goes to her mother, who hugs her warmly.

JULIE (CONT'D)
It was a lovely thought. But you
shouldn't be worrying about me. I'm
fine.

JULIE puts her arm around MILDRED's shoulders. They take in the pictures on the walls of the flat. JULIE's eye is caught by MILDRED's picture, on the table. She takes a closer look:

JULIE (CONT'D)
That's very good.

MILDRED
It's not, really. The perspective's
all wrong -

JULIE
I like it.

JULIE takes in the picture, witch and all.

JULIE (CONT'D)
(to MILDRED)
You draw what you see. That's what
makes it interesting.
(glancing at the mess)
Right, I'd better -

MILDRED

No, no. I'll do it.

JULIE

Thanks, Millie.

Planting a kiss on MILDRED's forehead, JULIE heads back to bed. MILDRED gets out a dustpan 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!

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

MILDRED 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 MAGICALLY...

CUT TO:

4

EXT. MILDRED'S FLAT, BALCONY - DAY 1 09:18

4

(MAUD, MILDRED)

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

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

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

MILDRED 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 MILDRED:

MAUD

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

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

MILDRED

(to herself)

It's real...

MAUD

You OK?

MILDRED

(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.

MILDRED

(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.

MILDRED

Entrance exam?

MAUD
For Miss Cackle's Academy!

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

MILDRED
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?

MILDRED
No. But we can find them. Come on!

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

CUT TO:

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

The communal area outside the block of flats.

MILDRED and MAUD are on their hands and knees, looking for MAUD's glasses.

MILDRED
If they fell off just before you
landed, they can't be far. We just
have to keep looking...

MILDRED concentrates hard, looking around...

At the other side of the field, a NEIGHBOUR'S DOG (JAKE)
looks up, alert. A look between MILDRED and JAKE.

JAKE runs off...

MILDRED and MAUD are on their hands and knees, searching as
the DOG bounds up to MILDRED. MAUD flinches, nervous - but
MILDRED makes a fuss of him.

MILDRED (CONT'D)
Hi, Jake!
(petting him)
Good boy... What have you got
there?

MILDRED takes something from the dog's mouth...

MAUD, still carrying her broomstick, walks over.

MAUD
My glasses!

MILDRED hands MAUD the glasses. They're broken and bent; the
glass has all fallen out.

MILDRED
... Sorry...

A gutted MAUD stares at the glasses.

MAUD
My parents paid for extra flying
lessons to help me get in. I've let
everyone down...

MILDRED
No you haven't. I'll help you. I
promise...

MRS ROBERTS, JAKE's owner, is staring curiously at MILDRED.

MRS ROBERTS
Mildred? You all right, love?

MILDRED
(not really - this is a
very strange day!)
Yes - it's just -
(gesturing at MAUD)
- her glasses are broken-

MRS ROBERTS
Whose?

MILDRED
(gestures towards Maud)
... hers...?

MILDRED realises - MRS ROBERTS can't see MAUD! She's slightly freaked out - but this isn't the strangest thing that's happened this morning. She makes a decision to cover:

MILDRED (CONT'D)
(to MRS ROBERTS)
My mum's. My mum's glasses got
broken. I'm just - going to get her
some new ones - see you later!

MILDRED heads off. MAUD follows. MRS ROBERTS watches, curiously.

MRS ROBERTS' POV: MILDRED appears to be walking off on her own...

CUT TO:

6

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS (PF) - DAY 1 09:24

6

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ESMERELDA N/S, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, LUCINDA'S MOTHER N/S, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARDBROOM, PARENTS N/S, TEACHERS N/S)

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.

MISS HARDBROOM and MISS CACKLE watch the arrivals. MISS HARDBROOM is dressed from head to toe in black, wears an intimidatingly pointy hat, and radiates disapproval. MISS 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.

MISS CACKLE

Here they come. The future of witchcraft.

MISS HARDBROOM

(looks at the candidates,
gloomy)

The new term starts in six weeks.
And *these* are our potential first-formers.

MISS CACKLE

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

MISS HARDBROOM

You said that last year. And the year before.

MISS CACKLE

Well, true talent is rare -

MISS HARDBROOM

Rare? It's practically extinct!
Face it Ada, the Craft is in decline.

MISS CACKLE
Not while I'm Headmistress.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:25 7
(MAUD, MILDRED)

MILDRED looks around - they're alone.

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

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

MILDRED
I'm not magical.

MAUD
But you can see me -

MILDRED
I know!

MAUD looks at MILDRED - suddenly intrigued and a bit nervous.

MAUD
Who are you?

MILDRED
I'm just - Mildred. Mildred
Hubble...
(smiles apologetically)
Hi.

MAUD smiles back.

MAUD
Maud Spellbody...

MAUD does a little bow, takes MILDRED's hand and presses it
to her forehead.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Well met, Sister.

MILDRED
(of the bow)
Is that a witch thing?

MAUD

Yep. I've been practising...

(sad)

Oh well. I can try again next year.

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

MILDRED

No. You're going to get in *this* year!

MAUD

But I can't fly without my glasses.

MILDRED

You can if I help you!

MAUD looks at MILDRED, grateful

MAUD

You mean you'll come with me?

MILDRED

'Course. Just let me text my mum - then you can show me how to fly this thing...

CUT TO:

8 **EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:26** 8
(MAUD, MILDRED N/S)

MILDRED 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, MILDRED 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:

9 **EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:27** ⁹
(MILDRED N/S, MRS ROBERTS N/S) **DOG**

MRS ROBERTS' POV. She watches MILDRED, apparently alone, sprinting across the green, jumping up and falling over. She shakes her head, turns her back to Mildred and carries on walking Jake in another direction.

CUT TO:

10

EXT. MILDRED'S BLOCK OF FLATS, COMMUNAL GREEN - DAY 1 09:28¹⁰
(MAUD, MILDRED) **DOG**

Mildred and Maud are trying yet again. Charging towards take-off at full pelt, one hand each on the broomstick.

MAUD

Go go go!

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

MILDRED

Yes! We did it!

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

MAUD

(yells in triumph)

Yay!

MILDRED

(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?

MILDRED

Left - left - I said left!

MAUD

We are going left!

MILDRED

Oh, OK.

(beat)

Right. Go right.

MAUD veers right...

MAUD

I thought you said you knew the way?

MILDRED

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

They veer dangerously close to the ground. JAKE the dog looks up curiously - the only one who can see them.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

Up - UP!

They soar away from the estate...

CUT TO:

11

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GROUNDS (PF) - DAY 1 09:50

11

(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, MILDRED N/S, MISS BAT, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL, MISS GULLET, MISS HARDBROOM, PARENTS N/S, TEACHERS N/S)

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

MISS DRILL

(to MISS HARDBROOM)

What's up with you, HB? You look like you've lost a cream cake and found a carrot.

MISS HARDBROOM

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

MISS BAT peers at her over her thick spectacles.

MISS BAT

We were all little girls once, Hecate. Even me.

MISS 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.

MISS HARDBROOM

Somebody from another school, perhaps.

The MOTHER looks affronted. LUCINDA looks despondent.

MISS CACKLE

Miss Gullet.

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

MISS GULLET
(drones, boring)
Health and safety is very
important. We can provide anti-
allergy spells...

The MOTHER looks slightly mollified.

MISS HARDBROOM
I truly despair for the future.

MISS CACKLE
They'll learn. We all did.

MISS BAT
Eventually.

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

MISS HARDBROOM
(concedes)
Well, maybe there is *some* hope.

MISS DRILL
(appreciative)
Good 'stick control -

ETHEL hops neatly off her broomstick. She snaps her fingers
and her broomstick goes into hover mode and follows her.

MISS HARDBROOM
- Perfect dismount.

ESMERELDA
That's my sister, Ethel.

MISS HARDBROOM permits herself a thin smile of approval. She
draws a little star by Ethel's name on the list.

MISS HARDBROOM
Ethel Hallow.

ETHEL walks up to ESMERELDA.

ETHEL
Esme.

ESMERELDA
Ethy -

The girls hug - but it's slightly formal and awkward. MISS
CACKLE goes over to greet ETHEL.

MISS 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 Hardbroom.

MISS CACKLE

Well met.

MISS HARDBROOM

Two Hallows in one school.

(to ETHEL)

You have a lot to live up to.

ETHEL

I'll do my best.

MISS CACKLE

(reassuring)

Of course you will. But there's no need to be intimidated. Nobody expects you to be as clever as Esmerelda.

ETHEL's lips curl slightly.

ESMERELDA

Miss Cackle -

MISS 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! Incoming!

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

MAUD

(in a panic)

Look out, the pooooooooooooond...

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

CUT TO:

12

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 09:52

12

(MAUD, MILDRED, MISS HARDBROOM) **FROG**

MILDRED 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.

MILDRED
(looks around)
Maud?!

MILDRED'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!

MILDRED
I'll save you!

MILDRED frantically flails towards MAUD...

MISS HARDBROOM appears at the pond bank. MILDRED calls over to her, frantic.

MILDRED (CONT'D)
Help!

MISS HARDBROOM
(makes no attempt to help)
Some believe that a true witch will
always float in water. Of course, a
sensible witch would try to stand
up, first.

A moment. Then MILDRED and MAUD both stand up. Their shoulders protruding from the water - it's about four feet deep. They look at each other in dismay -

- and simultaneously realise how ridiculous they look, each covered in slimy green pondweed. MAUD bursts out laughing. And MILDRED does too...

A nearby FROG is watching them with a surprisingly intelligent expression on its frog-face. It CROAKS, as if it's joining in the laughter.

MILDRED
(to the FROG)
Sorry to disturb you.

FROG
Croak!

MISS HARDBROOM (O.S.)
You, girl. Stop bothering your
intellectual superiors and get out.

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

MILDRED
(amazed, to MAUD)
She just magicked us dry!

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

MAUD
(nervous)
Well met...

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

MISS HARDBROOM
I am Miss Hardbroom. Deputy
Headmistress. And you are?

MAUD
Maud Spellbody.

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

MILDRED
It was my fault.

MISS HARDBROOM
(withering)
And who are you?

MILDRED
Mildred. Mildred Hubble.

MISS HARDBROOM
You're not on my list.

MILDRED 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...

MISS HARDBROOM looks sceptical, but MAUD brazens it out.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Mum said it would be OK.

MISS HARDBROOM
(a beat)
Well. I suppose we should give you
a chance to redeem yourself,
Mildred Hubble.

MISS HARDBROOM adds Mildred's name to her list. MILDRED looks
at MAUD in consternation:

MILDRED
(sotto)
Why - ?

MAUD
(sotto)
You helped me.
(grins)
Why not?

MISS HARDBROOM
You'd better get on with the tour.

MILDRED
Tour?

MISS HARDBROOM makes a magical gesture. The three of them
DISAPPEAR -

CUT TO:

13

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY HALLWAY - DAY 1 09:54

13

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM)

- and REAPPEAR by the heavy FRONT DOOR to the school, where ESMERELDA and MISS CACKLE are surrounded by a small group of respectful, prospective students including ETHEL, FELICITY, CHARLOTTE, BELLA, LUCINDA, ETHEL and DRUSILLA.

MISS HARDBROOM
Esmerelda! Two more for you.
Mildred Hubble and Maud Spellbody.

ESMERELDA
(gestures)
Mildred. Maud. This is Miss Cackle,
our Headmistress.

MAUD's looking round, disorientated. MILDRED watches -
feeling very ill.

MISS CACKLE
(to MAUD, gentle, smiling)
I'm over here...

MAUD
(squinting, embarrassed)
I'm so sorry - I broke my glasses -

MISS CACKLE
Show me.

Nervously, MAUD produces her smashed glasses. MISS CACKLE waves her hand. Magically, Maud's glasses are mended.

MAUD
Thank you Miss Cackle!
(remembers her manners and
bows formally)
Um... Well met.

MISS CACKLE
Well met, Maud. Well met, Mildred.

MILDRED tries to imitate MAUD's bow.

MILDRED
Well met -

But she feels queasy. She has her hand over her mouth...

MISS CACKLE
(to Mildred)
Are you all right, my dear?

MILDRED

I...

MILDRED tries to reply - but is forced to turn away...

... and all the other APPLICANTS leap back in disgust as MILDRED retches.

DRUSILLA

Urrrgh! Dis-gust-ing!

FELICITY

Gross.

CHARLOTTE is also grossed out.

MAUD

Leave her alone, she's travel sick!

ETHEL

(gesturing to the pond)

She only came from over there!

(sotto, to DRUSILLA)

Pathetic.

DRUSILLA

(indicating LUCINDA)

Even *she* didn't do that.

MISS CACKLE

(to MILDRED, kind)

You've never been through a Transference Spell before, have you, dear?

MILDRED shakes her head - afraid she'll be ill again if she tries to speak.

MISS CACKLE (CONT'D)

I'll tell you a secret. I did the same my first time... Here. Take this.

MISS CACKLE hands MILDRED a brightly-coloured boiled sweet.

MILDRED

(tentative)

Is it magic?

MISS CACKLE

Better. It's sugar. I never go anywhere without a bag of lemon drops. Suck on that and you'll be fine next time.

MILDRED

What? I'm not doing that -

ESMERELDA gestures, and the group VANISHES -

CUT TO:

14

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY CORRIDOR - DAY 1 09:55

14

(AGATHA N/S, BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED)

MILDRED

- again!

MILDRED blinks as she realises they've all moved location.
ESMERELDA grins at her.

ESMERELDA

Gets easier, doesn't it? OK, so.
I'm Esmerelda, I'm head of Year
Three.

FELICITY

I thought all the girls were on
holiday?

ESMERELDA

I was. But I volunteered to help
out Cackle and HB -

DRUSILLA

What's HB?

ESMERELDA

Hardbroom. Head of Year One.
(grins)
You'll soon know all about her...
(brisk)
Right, come on, this way.

ESMERELDA leads the way down the corridor. The group follow
her. She talks and points rapidly.

ESMERELDA (CONT'D)

Bit of a maze round here but you
soon get used to it. Kitchen's in
the basement, that's why the
porridge is always so cold -

MILDRED

Why don't they just make food by
magic?

Everyone turns to look at MILDRED. ETHEL jumps in, keen to
show off.

ETHEL

A witch cannot live by magic alone.
Witches' code, rule number ninety-
three, paragraph six, clause A.

ESMERELDA
("shut up")
All right, Ethel.
(to MILDRED)
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 MILDRED)
Didn't your mother teach you
anything about magic?

Before MILDRED 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

INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 10:05

15

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD N/S, MILDRED)

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

MILDRED looks around in excitement and disbelief.

MILDRED

Are these all magic spells?

DRUSILLA

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:

16

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY BEDROOM - DAY 1 10:19

16

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA, ESMERELDA, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD N/S, MILDRED) **BATS**

The girls enter A bedroom.

ESMERELDA

So, this is your typical hutch.

DRUSILLA

(shivering)

These are the *bedrooms*?

ESMERELDA

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

FELICITY

This is, like, seriously old-school.

ESMERELDA

Yes, that's kind of our thing.

MILDRED 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.

MILDRED

I don't!

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

CUT TO:

17

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.

MILDRED
Kittens!

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

MILDRED
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 MILDRED
hangs back:

MAUD
Come on, Mildred.

MILDRED
I can't pass a witch exam! 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 MILDRED inside. But, at the end of the corridor, a suspicious ETHEL turns back. She looks at the empty corridor - where did Mildred and Maud go?

CUT TO:

18

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITTEN ROOM - DAY 1 10:21
(ETHEL N/S, MAUD, MILDRED) **KITTENS**

18

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

MILDRED's blown away by the cuteness.

MILDRED

Kittens!

MILDRED 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...

MILDRED

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 *some* magic in your family.

MILDRED

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

MAUD stares at MILDRED - can't really comprehend.

MAUD

You lived your *whole life* without magic?

MILDRED

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

Unseen by MILDRED 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...

Unseen by MILDRED 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...

MILDRED nods - but is then distracted:

MILDRED
(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.

MILDRED
I thought I did!

Mildred runs out of the door - followed by Maud.

CUT TO:

19

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, CORRIDOR BY KITTEN ROOM - DAY 1 10:23

(MAUD, MILDRED)

MILDRED and MAUD look up and down the corridor - no kitten.

MILDRED

(panicking)

We've lost a kitten!

MAUD

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

MILDRED

Where the food is...

MAUD

The kitchen!

MILDRED

(points)

That way!

MAUD

(corrects her, points the opposite way)

That way...

CUT TO:

20

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITCHEN - DAY 1 10:35

20

(AGATHA, DINNER WITCHES N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS TAPIOCA) **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 fearsome MISS TAPIOCA appears:

MISS TAPIOCA
NO GIRLS ALLOWED IN MY KITCHEN!

MILDRED and MAUD quail.

MILDRED
I'm sorry! -

MAUD
- We were just...

MILDRED
... Looking for a kitten.

MAUD
(points)
There he is!

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

MILDRED
(to the kitten)
Here...
(beat)
Come here. Please...

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

MAUD
Wow Mildred, you're amazing with animals!

MISS TAPIOCA
All right, you've got it. Now get out!

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

MILDRED
We're going!

The girls turn to go but their way is blocked by MISS 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

Miss 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:

MISS CACKLE (O.S.)

Agatha!

The girls turn to see MISS 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 Miss 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
MISS CACKLE)

Well met, Sister.

MISS 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?

MISS CACKLE

These two girls were missing.

(to MILDRED 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?

MILDRED

He escaped.

MISS CACKLE

(a beat. Then, briskly)

Well. No harm done.

MISS CACKLE waves her hand. The KITTEN disappears.

MISS 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.

MISS CACKLE pointedly waits for AGATHA to leave before
ushering MAUD and MILDRED out of the room.

CUT TO:

21

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GREAT HALL (PF) - DAY 1 10:40

21

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD N/S, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET, MISS HARDBROOM)

A tense atmosphere. The girls sit at their exam desks. MISS GULLET is chief invigilator - looking very serious and dour. MISS CACKLE enters with MAUD and MILDRED.

MISS HARDBROOM

Finally.

MISS GULLET

(points MILDRED to an empty desk)

You sit there.

(to MAUD)

You, there.

MAUD and MILDRED take their seats - MILDRED with a lot of trepidation.

MISS GULLET (CONT'D)

Begin.

A rustling as the girls turn their papers. ETHEL smiles with confidence and starts writing immediately. MAUD sits, chewing her pen and reading the questions. She glances over at MILDRED -

- who's staring at her paper in utter horror and incomprehension.

MILDRED (V.O.)

(reads)

If a Kingmaker Spell contains five lizards' legs and seven adder's Forks, how many eyes of newt are required...

MILDRED looks around. All the other girls are writing now, even MAUD. MILDRED slumps in despair - this is impossible.

MISS CACKLE

Are you all right, dear?

MILDRED

I can't do this.

ETHEL, busy writing in perfect old-fashioned copperplate, snorts with derisive laughter. Next to her, a sycophantic DRUSILLA laughs too.

MISS CACKLE

(to MILDRED, confidential)

I always hated exams too.

(MORE)

MISS 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*.

MILDRED stares at her in incomprehension - then works it out.

MILDRED

You mean - focus on what I *can* do?

MISS CACKLE smiles and taps her head. MILDRED furrows her brow in concentration and picks up her pen...

MISS CACKLE

(to MISS HARDBROOM)

Take charge, Hecate. I need to speak to my sister.

MISS CACKLE heads out.

Time passes...

CUT TO:

22

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 10:45

22

(AGATHA, MISS CACKLE)

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

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

MISS 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.

MISS 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.

MISS CACKLE

Well, they needn't be.

AGATHA

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

MISS 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 -

MISS CACKLE

You're not wearing a hat.

AGATHA

Sorry, force of habit. I swear on
the Code.

MISS CACKLE looks at AGATHA - that's a big deal.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

I want to make it up to you.

MISS CACKLE

How?

AGATHA

(enthused, excited)

Let me tell the witching world
about the great work you're doing
here. They'll realise that the
future of the Craft is in safe
hands.

MISS CACKLE considers AGATHA's request. She seems sincere.

MISS CACKLE

What do you need from me?

AGATHA

Let me interview the girls -
(MISS CACKLE shakes her
head)
- all right, the teachers?

MISS CACKLE

You may speak to Miss Hardbroom.
(getting up)
I'll let her know.

She's about to leave, but pauses:

MISS CACKLE (CONT'D)

(with warmth)

Well met, Sister.

AGATHA

(grateful, humble)

Well met.

CUT TO:

23

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY GREAT HALL (PF) - DAY 1 12:00

23

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD N/S, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARDBROOM)

Later. The SCHOOL BELL tolls with funereal dolour.

MISS HARDBROOM

Time's up, girls. Pens down.

MISS 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 MISS HARDBROOM. MISS HARDBROOM smiles rustily back and moves on to MILDRED's desk. MISS HARDBROOM picks up her paper, casually glances at it - can't believe what she's reading.

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

(finally)

Is this some variety of joke?

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

MILDRED

Miss Cackle said to focus on what I can do. Art's my best subject...

MISS HARDBROOM

I'll give you one percent. And that's only because you spelled your own name correctly.

MILDRED's POV - time slows down as everyone focuses on her - pointing, laughing.

Unseen by MILDRED and everyone else, one of the drawings begins to glow in a similar way to the drawing in scene 3. It's the picture of MAUD and MILDRED on the broomstick.

A sympathetic MAUD reaches out to MILDRED -

- but, utterly humiliated, MILDRED gets up and runs out of the examination room -

- and into MISS CACKLE as she enters.

MISS CACKLE

Where are you going?

MILDRED

Home -

MISS CACKLE

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

MILDRED looks around. There's no escape...

CUT TO:

24

INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 13:00

24

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ESMERELDA N/S, ETHEL, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS BAT N/S, MISS CACKLE, MISS 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.

MISS CACKLE

Before we begin the Practical Test,
Miss Hardbroom has the results of
your written papers.

MISS 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. MILDRED 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%. FAIL".

MISS HARDBROOM

Some of your papers were utterly
abominable. And those were the
better ones.

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

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

However, there was one chink of
light in the howling void. A
perfect one hundred percent.

ETHEL stands up.

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

Ethel Hallow, stand up -

She sees that ETHEL is already standing.

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

Ethel, you have equalled the school
record.

ETHEL

(disappointed)
Equalled?

MISS CACKLE

Your sister also scored one hundred
percent in *her* written entrance
exam.

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

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

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

MISS CACKLE
Candidates, choose your spells.

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

MILDRED
(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.

MISS CACKLE is by ETHEL's cauldron.

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

ETHEL
Only because level nine aren't
allowed.

MISS 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. MILDRED has found a spell she likes the
look of:

MILDRED
Basic lev-it-ation. Level One. "If
on flying you've set your mind,
then these ingredients you must
find..."

MILDRED studies the list of ingredients...

Meanwhile, MISS CACKLE is having a private word with MISS HARDBROOM:

MISS HARDBROOM
Agatha wants to see me?

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

MILDRED goes over to the central table to collect ingredients.

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

CUT TO:

25

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 13:20
(AGATHA, MISS HARDBROOM)

25

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

MISS HARDBROOM
I've never been interviewed for a
"web site" before.

AGATHA
It's nothing to worry about,
Hecate.

MISS HARDBROOM
I'm not worried.

AGATHA
Well maybe you should be.

MISS HARDBROOM raises an eyebrow - explain!

AGATHA (CONT'D)
The Craft is in a state of hurly-
burly. Fewer and fewer girls are
inheriting magical ability. It must
be tough, trying to keep standards
up.

MISS 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".

MISS HARDBROOM looks at AGATHA - assessing her, considering her words...

CUT TO:

26

INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 13:42

26

(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 old-fashioned scales with miniature weights - balancing carefully.

MILDRED grinds her ingredients with a pestle and mortar and places them into her cauldron. She takes a jug and pours in the contents:

MILDRED (V.O.)
Slowly add the unicorn's milk, Stir
it 'till it's soft as silk...

The mixture begins to bubble. MILDRED turns the page in the spell book. It shows a diagram of a magical hand gesture. MILDRED copies it as best she can, wiggling her fingers desperately.

MILDRED stares into the cauldron anxiously. The potion continues to bubble. MAUD sidles over:

MAUD
(whispers)
How's the brew going?

MILDRED
(whispers)
It's supposed to turn blue...

MAUD peers into the cauldron.

MAUD
(whispers, careful)
Did you add the pondweed gathered
at midnight?

MILDRED shakes her head - no. MAUD returns to her own cauldron.

Meanwhile, Ethel's looking at her scales - she needs more pondweed.

MILDRED goes to the ingredients table - just as ETHEL grabs all of the remaining pondweed and takes it to her table.

MILDRED looks at the empty section of table. What does she do now?

ETHEL adds the pondweed to the scales - perfectly balanced. She goes over to her cauldron and chants an incantation:

ETHEL
(dramatic)
Breath of fire, hide of armour -

MILDRED looks at the pondweed in the scales. summons up her courage to ask ETHEL:

MILDRED
Ethel, can I just -

ETHEL
(annoyed)
Not now!
(returns to her chanting)
Give me strength, give me
glamour...

MILDRED hovers - not knowing what to do.

MISS CACKLE
Five minutes, girls!

MILDRED's in an agony of indecision. ETHEL continues to chant, ignoring her.

MILDRED decides. She grabs a couple of strands of pondweed from the scales - which wobble. MILDRED runs back and puts the pondweed in her own cauldron. The mixture froths again, and this time turns blue.

MILDRED takes a spoon and dips it in the cauldron and cautiously sips. She waits expectantly...

MAUD (O.S.)
Mildred!

MILDRED turns to see MAUD.

MAUD (CONT'D)
Did my potion work?

MILDRED
I don't know. What was it supposed
to do?

MAUD
Make me taller - whhooaaaahhh!

Suddenly, MAUD is struggling to stay on her feet as her head shoots upwards. She's now about two feet taller than MILDRED...

MILDRED
I think it worked.
(sadly)
Mine didn't do anything.

MAUD

Uh - Mildred?

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

MILDRED

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

MAUD

(delighted)

We did it!

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

MISS HARDBROOM

All right, that's enough.

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

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)

(to MILDRED)

Not a bad effort.

MILDRED beams, but MISS 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, Ethy.

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 -

Rrrrrrrraaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrrggggghh!

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...

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

MILDRED
(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
Ethy?!

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

ESMERELDA (CONT'D)
(concerned)
Miss Cackle...

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

ESMERELDA (CONT'D)
Is that her?

MISS CACKLE
Oh dear, I'm afraid 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. MILDRED and MAUD try desperately to suppress their laughter.

MISS BAT
(peering through her
ancient spectacles)
What is it?

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

MISS 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?

MISS 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)

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Someone messed with my potion! I
demand an enquiry!

MISS HARDBROOM

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

MILDRED has a horrible moment of realisation...

ETHEL

I did! I measured out the exact
amount!

MILDRED

She's right.

(beat)

It was me. I did it.

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

27

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY ONE 14.00

27

(ETHEL, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM)

MILDRED faces the wrath of ETHEL and the teachers:

ETHEL

She deliberately wrecked my spell!

MILDRED

No! It was a mistake -

ETHEL

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

MISS HARDBROOM reacts - greatly displeased. MISS CACKLE is
surprised but interested.

MISS HARDBROOM

(to Mildred)

You lied to us.

MILDRED

Not exactly...

A knock at the door, and a scared MAUD enters.

MISS HARDBROOM

What do you want?

MAUD

I just want to say - please don't
blame Mildred. I told her to take
the pondweed - it was my fault.

ETHEL

The point is, it wasn't *my* fault.

(to Miss Cackle)

I'll do it again. I'll get it right
this time...

(desperate)

Please let me do it again!

MISS CACKLE

Sorry, Ethel. You really should
have double-checked your
ingredients. A good witch leaves
nothing to chance.

ETHEL looks sulky.

MISS CACKLE (CONT'D)

But don't worry! With your
wonderful marks in the written
exam, I'm sure you've scored enough
to scrape a pass.

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

MISS CACKLE
(to Mildred)
And you... You really have *no* craft
in your family at all?

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

MISS HARDBROOM
You interfered with another witch
in the course of lawful spell-
casting. In direct violation of the
Witches' Code.

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

MISS HARDBROOM
(To MILDRED)
Nought per cent.

MILDRED's gutted. MAUD is gutted for her.

MILDRED
Nought per cent?

ETHEL
At least it makes your written
result look good.

MAUD
That's not fair!

MISS HARDBROOM
Are you questioning the Code?

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

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

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

MISS CACKLE (CONT'D)

Our magic must be used with utmost caution.

(to MILDRED)

I'm afraid that a real witch would know that.

CUT TO:

28

INT. POTIONS LAB - DAY 1 14:30

28

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ETHEL N/S, FELICITY N/S, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS 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 MISS HARDBROOM.

MISS CACKLE

(beaming)

Congratulations to our new First Years! You've all done splendidly. I shall see you all later, for our celebratory feast.

MISS HARDBROOM

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

MILDRED and MAUD realise that this is goodbye.

MILDRED

(to MAUD)

I'm glad you got in, anyway.

MAUD

I just wish you were coming too.

MILDRED

I really let you down.

MAUD

No you didn't!

MAUD hugs MILDRED. There are tears in both girls' eyes.

Suddenly, both MILDRED and MAUD jump as MISS HARDBROOM appears out of nowhere:

MISS HARDBROOM

Mildred Hubble! Are you *still* here?

MILDRED

(with great dignity)

I was just leaving, Miss Hardbroom.

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

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

MILDRED (CONT'D)

Um, which way do I go....?

MISS HARDBROOM looks at MILDRED, impatient.

CUT TO:

29

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:31
(MILDRED, MISS HARDBROOM)

29

MILDRED passes a portrait of a grim-looking group of witches - each look scarier than Miss Hardbroom. She shudders. Tries to remember the directions Miss Hardbroom gave her:

MISS HARDBROOM (V.O.)
First right, through the vestibule
to the sinister side, then head up
the widdershins staircase. If you
find yourself in the belfry you've
gone too far.

MILDRED
(to herself)
First right...

MILDRED turns left...

CUT TO:

30

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:32
(AGATHA, MILDRED)

30

MILDRED 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. MILDRED hurries towards it -

- but as she gets there, it splutters out.

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

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

MILDRED

Hello?

MILDRED 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...

MILDRED (CONT'D)

Aaaarrgh!

MILDRED is shaking with fear.

AGATHA

Are you all right, dear?

MILDRED looks up, to see (as she thinks) MISS CACKLE. (Actually, it's AGATHA, wearing a copy of MISS CACKLE's outfit).

MILDRED

I'm sorry, Miss Cackle! I'm just...

(a confession)

I'm not really very good with the dark.

AGATHA blows in the direction of the lantern. It magically re-ignites, spreading a warm glow around the corridor. AGATHA peers intensely into MILDRED's face. She takes MILDRED's chin in her hands and stares thoughtfully into her eyes - using her very strong witching powers to see into the topmost layers of Mildred's mind. Mildred flinches - not understanding what's going on, but knowing that something is.

AGATHA

And yet, you wanted to learn to be a witch...?

MILDRED
(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...

MILDRED 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 MILDRED's chin. MILDRED's losing her battle. A tear rolls down her cheek. AGATHA thoughtfully passes her a handkerchief. MILDRED wipes her tears.

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

MILDRED 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, MILDRED senses something's wrong. She looks curiously at AGATHA - and follows AGATHA's gaze to the now tear-soaked handkerchief. MILDRED stops crying. AGATHA's behaviour is really weird... MILDRED looks at the handkerchief. It's initialled - "A.C." No clue there...

AGATHA (CONT'D)
Feeling better?

MILDRED
Not really, no.
(an idea)
Can I have a lemon drop, please?

AGATHA
Lemon drop?

A moment - MILDRED and AGATHA stare at each other. MILDRED knows something's wrong. And AGATHA knows she knows...

AGATHA (CONT'D)
(quickly)
The lights will guide you out.

AGATHA stuffs the handkerchief into her pocket, makes a magical hand gesture and rushes off.

MILDRED

But - I -

But AGATHA's gone. MILDRED's on her own.

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

CUT TO:

31

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:33
(MILDRED N/S)

31

MILDRED 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, MILDRED gathers her courage and heads back the way she came - into the darkness...

CUT TO:

32

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:34

32

(MILDRED N/S)

MILDRED creeps along the corridor. Nervous, but determined.
It gets so dark that she has to grope her way along the
wall...

CUT TO:

33

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, CORRIDOR NEAR KITCHENS - DAY 1 14:35³³
(MILDRED N/S)

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

CUT TO:

34

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY KITCHEN - DAY 1 14:36

34

(AGATHA, DINNER WITCH, DINNER WITCHES N/S, MILDRED N/S, MISS TAPIOCA)

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

MISS TAPIOCA
(respectful)
Miss Cackle!

AGATHA
Miss Tapioca!
(to the DINNER WITCHES)
The successful candidates are ready
for the feast. You'd better lay the
tables.

DINNER WITCH
Yes, Miss Cackle.

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)
Mmmm, delicious!

MISS TAPIOCA
Thank you, Miss Cackle.

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

MISS TAPIOCA
I've been using this recipe for
thirty years -

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

AGATHA
Who's Headmistress?

MISS TAPIOCA
Ground snail shell, you say...

MISS 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, Mildred 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.

MISS TAPIOCA bangs on the door.

MISS TAPIOCA
Let me out!

AGATHA
Oh, 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, MILDRED quietly backs out of the kitchen...

CUT TO:

35

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY, DARK CORRIDOR - DAY 1 14:38
(MILDRED)

35

MILDRED flies along the corridor, forgetting her fear of the dark in her haste to warn the other witches.

MILDRED
Miss Cackle... Miss Cackle!!

CUT TO:

36

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 14:41 36

(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, MILDRED, MISS BAT N/S, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARDBROOM, TEACHERS N/S) **PENDLE**

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:

MISS 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 -

MILDRED bursts in through the main doors.

MILDRED

(panting)

Miss Cackle!

MISS HARDBROOM is suddenly at MILDRED's side:

MISS HARDBROOM

Miss Cackle is *speaking* -

MILDRED

Please! You have to listen -

MISS HARDBROOM

Not now!

MILDRED

Yes, now! You're all in danger!

MAUD

(getting up)

Mildred! What's wrong?

MISS HARDBROOM

Sit down, Maud!

(to MILDRED)

As for you, I have had quite enough of your lies -

MILDRED

But it's true!

MISS HARDBROOM

- Time to leave -

MISS HARDBROOM makes a magical gesture...

CUT TO:

37

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY MAIN ENTRANCE (PF) - DAY 1 14:42
(MILDRED)

37

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

MILDRED
(still shouting)
But Agatha -

MILDRED 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:

MILDRED (CONT'D)
Miss Hardbroom! Miss Cackle! *Maud!*

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

CUT TO:

38

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 14:43
(MILDRED) **FROG**

38

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

MILDRED
(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...

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

FROG
Croak!

MILDRED
I *tried* to save them. They wouldn't
listen. Not like there's anything I
can do anyway...

FROG
Croak!

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

MILDRED
The Common Cattrap flower! From the
levitation spell...

FROG
(encouraging)
Croak!

MILDRED
But I can't do magic! And we don't
even have a cauldron -

FROG
Croak!

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

CUT TO:

39

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.00

39

(AGATHA N/S, 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 N/S, MISS BAT, MISS CACKLE, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARDBROOM, TEACHERS N/S) **PENDLE**

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

MISS 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.

MISS HARDBROOM

Nobody may eat until Miss Cackle has been served.

MAUD slumps, disappointed. So does MISS DRILL - also hungry.

MISS CACKLE

Not to mention your great-grandmothers. 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.

MISS BAT

(waking)

Is it dinner time?

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

MISS CACKLE

In this school, we respect the past and present of witchcraft. But our most important duty is to build its future. You are that future.

AGATHA sneaks in. She lurks out of sight at the back of the hall, smiling to herself.

The cauldron is set down next to MISS DRILL. She sniffs - the smell is too much for her to resist. As MISS CACKLE drones on and on, MISS DRILL can't help herself - she dips a piece of bread in and eats it. A starving MAUD notices, envious.

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

MISS CACKLE (CONT'D)
But I've rambled on quite enough.
Time to enjoy our Selection Day
feast!

The DINNER WITCHES begin ladling soup into bowls. AGATHA watches in secret satisfaction.

CUT TO:

40

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 15.01
(MILDRED) **FROG**

40

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

MILDRED
(to the frog)
Does that look right to you?

FROG
Croak!

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

MILDRED
Wish me luck!

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

MILDRED (CONT'D)
Well, I tried - aaargh!

Suddenly MILDRED 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.

MILDRED (CONT'D)
(yells)
Aaaaarrrggghh!

CUT TO:

41

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.02

41

(AGATHA N/S, 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 N/S, MISS BAT N/S, MISS CACKLE N/S, MISS DRILL N/S, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARBROOM 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

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY SCHOOL WALLS (PF) - DAY 1 15.03
(MILDRED N/S)

42

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

CUT TO:

43

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.04

43

(AGATHA, 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 DRILL, MISS GULLET, MISS GULLET N/S, MISS HARDBROOM, TEACHERS N/S) **PENDLE**

MISS 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 MILDRED flies in. She crashes onto MISS CACKLE's table. Cutlery and bread are thrown everywhere. MISS CACKLE's bowl of soup is spilled.

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

MILDRED

(scrambling to her feet)

I had to warn you. She put a spell on the soup!

MISS CACKLE

Who did?

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

AGATHA

I did.

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

MISS 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, MISS DRILL gets to her feet. She's quite unlike her usual bouncy self. She's glassy-eyed, in a trance.

MISS DRILL

(responding to AGATHA's order)

Agatha is our leader. She's the greatest witch who ever lived.

MISS HARDBROOM
Miss Drill!

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

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

MISS 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 Mildred said!

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

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

MISS 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 MISS 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.

MISS BAT
Girls, with me!

The GIRLS rush to MISS BAT.

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

AGATHA raises her arm again. So does MISS CACKLE.

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

MISS 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 MISS HARDBROOM and MILDRED remain outside the curtain as MISS CACKLE and AGATHA hurl spells at each other.

MISS CACKLE

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

AGATHA

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

MISS CACKLE

Don't confuse kindness with
weakness.

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

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

MISS HARDBROOM

Mildred Hubble! Come here, you
wretched girl!

MISS HARDBROOM grabs MILDRED 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.

MILDRED

What's a Section Seven?

ESMERELDA

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

MISS 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 MISS 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.

MISS 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 -

- the GIRLS scream and cower behind the protective barrier -

- and the table lands, upside-down, on MISS CACKLE. She's completely immobilised - only her head is sticking out.

Miss Cackle's CAT mews pathetically - sad to see its mistress in such distress.

AGATHA

Had enough yet, sister?

MISS DRILL

It's over. Agatha wins. All hail
Agatha.

MILDRED

(to MISS HARDBROOM)

Help her!

MISS HARDBROOM

The Code forbids it.

AGATHA

(raises her hands. To MISS
CACKLE)

Prepare to be mollusced!

ETHEL

She's turning her into a snail!
I've always wanted to see that.

MILDRED can't let this happen. She bursts out from behind the protective magical shield:

MILDRED

No!

MAUD

Mildred!

MISS HARDBROOM

Mildred Hubble!

But MILDRED ignores them and bravely goes up to AGATHA:

MILDRED

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 Mildred)

- you've just put them right back on track!

MISS CACKLE

(sad)

Oh, Mildred...

AGATHA

Ada. It's you or this girl. One of you is leaving here in a shell. Don't make me choose both!

MISS CACKLE

Let Mildred go.

AGATHA

You know my price. The school.

MISS CACKLE

Yes... Free her, and I will lower my protective spells.

MILDRED realises she's made yet another horrible mistake:

MILDRED

You had protective spells?

MISS HARDBROOM

Of course she did, you stupid girl!

MILDRED

So... you weren't about to lose the duel?

MISS CACKLE

No, Mildred.

A sudden BURST OF MAGICAL ENERGY from MISS CACKLE. The table rises and returns to its original position. MISS CACKLE rises majestically and advances towards AGATHA, who grabs MILDRED ferociously:

AGATHA

(to MISS CACKLE)

Stay back or the girl gets it!

MISS CACKLE

Release the child. Then - you may do as you will with me.

MILDRED

No!

AGATHA

(to MISS CACKLE)

How do I know can I trust you?

MISS CACKLE

I swear by the Witches' Code.

AGATHA

All right.

(to MILDRED)

Go.

AGATHA releases MILDRED and pushes her towards the protective boundary. MILDRED bites her lip and looks towards MISS CACKLE.

MISS CACKLE

Go, Mildred.

MAUD

(frantic)

Mildred!

MILDRED runs back through the magical barrier. MAUD grabs her and holds onto her.

AGATHA

(to MISS CACKLE)

Lower your spells.

MISS CACKLE gestures. An AURA becomes visible around her - and then dissipates.

AGATHA smiles.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

Who's on the naughty step now, big sis?

A bright line of spell-energy flows from AGATHA's hand and smacks into MISS CACKLE -

The GIRLS and STAFF watch in horror as MISS CACKLE disappears and is replaced by a tiny SNAIL on the ground.

AGATHA can't quite believe it:

AGATHA (CONT'D)

The school is mine.

MISS HARDBROOM steps forward.

MISS HARDBROOM

May I be the first to offer my congratulations - Headmistress?

Shocked MURMURINGS amongst the girls and staff.

MISS BAT

(shocked)

Hecate Hardbroom! After all Ada did for you!

MISS 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

Miss Cackle was strong!

MISS HARDBROOM

(glances at the snail)

Not strong enough, it seems.

MILDRED

But she only lost because of me!

MAUD

And Agatha's really evil!

MISS 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 school*, you are bound by the Witches' Code.

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

AGATHA

Miss Hardbroom. I knew I could depend on you.

MISS HARDBROOM

No member of staff - or any pupil will raise their hand against you.

(getting desperate now. At MILDRED)

We are all bound by the Witches' Code.

Finally, MILDRED gets it. She has to do something - but what? She looks wildly around the room - and sees the cauldron of soup. And then she looks back at PENDLE. An idea forming...

MISS HARDBROOM (CONT'D)
Perhaps, Agatha, you would like to
take possession of the keys to *your*
school?

AGATHA
Keys. To *my* school! At last.

MISS HARDBROOM
This way...

MISS HARDBROOM ushers AGATHA towards the door. With a final
desperate glance at MILDRED.

MILDRED
(sotto, to PENDLE)
Ready?

PENDLE
(mews, "ready".)

MILDRED
(to PENDLE)
Now!

- MILDRED looks at PENDLE -

- and AGATHA is suddenly unbalanced by a whirlwind of fur as
PENDLE darts between her legs, tripping her up -

- right into the cauldron of soup.

The cauldron tips over onto its side.

MILDRED (CONT'D)
(to the STAFF and GIRLS)
Now! Get her! Come on!

MILDRED rushes over to the cauldron - expecting the others to
follow, but they don't...

MISS GULLET
We can't. It's against the Code.

MILDRED looks at the staff and girls in dismay.

MILDRED
We have to stop her! Somebody help
me! Please!

MAUD is about to rush over to MILDRED and help, but before
she can, AGATHA stands up, dripping with soup.

MILDRED stares at her in shock.

AGATHA
(responding to MILDRED's
order)
(MORE)

AGATHA (CONT'D)

I will help you, Mistress Mildred.
What should I do?

MILDRED

What?

MAUD

(to MILDRED)

The Total Obedience spell! Quick,
give her orders!

MILDRED

Um - I order you to lose the duel.
And turn that snail back into Miss
Cackle.

AGATHA

I obey.

AGATHA makes a magical gesture. The snail changes back into
MISS CACKLE. She's crawling, curled on the ground in a
"snail" pose.

MISS HARDBROOM

Get up Ada. It's over...

ESMERELDA and other senior girls rush to help MISS CACKLE to
her feet.

MISS CACKLE

Thank you, Mildred. That was very
clever.

MILDRED

Was it?

MISS CACKLE

Yes. It was the perfect way to deal
with Agatha.

MILDRED glances at AGATHA. She's standing still, eyes glazed,
waiting for the next command from MILDRED.

MISS DRILL

Agatha. Agatha is our leader...

MISS HARDBROOM

(snaps)

Oh, do stop doing that!

MISS HARDBROOM snaps her fingers. MISS DRILL blinks and
instantly becomes her normal self.

MISS DRILL

Sorry everyone. Bit embarrassing...

CUT TO:

44

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:20

44

(JULIE, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM N/S)

MILDRED

So - what will happen to Agatha?

MISS CACKLE

(grave)

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

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

MILDRED

Mum!

JULIE

(very confused)

Mildred!?

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

MILDRED

(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

INT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY DINING ROOM (PF) - DAY 1 15.29

45

(AGATHA, MISS BAT, MISS DRILL, MISS GULLET)

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

MISS 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.

MISS GULLET

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

MISS DRILL

And you've put me off soup for life.

MISS BAT

So, it's time for you to go home.

AGATHA

Home?

MISS BAT

(nods)

Your mother is on her way to collect you.

AGATHA

(snarls)

I don't think so!

AGATHA leaps to her feet and raises her arms to hurl spells at the three teachers - but nothing happens. She looks at her hands, confused. And furious.

AGATHA (CONT'D)

My powers...

The three teachers nod sternly.

46

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:30

46

(JULIE, MILDRED, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM)

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

JULIE
Magic... Is real.

MISS CACKLE
That is correct.

JULIE
I can't... I just can't... [believe
it]

JULIE trails off, at a loss for words.

MILDRED
(quietly)
It's OK, Mum.

MISS HARDBROOM
(to JULIE)
If you need more proof, I will
happily turn you into a pumpkin.

MISS CACKLE
(warning, to MISS
HARDBROOM)
Hecate.

JULIE
(to MISS CACKLE)
So you're magic... The teachers are
all magic... And the girls learn
magic...?

MISS HARDBROOM
I see where Mildred 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.

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

MISS CACKLE
(to JULIE)
Did you even realise that Mildred
had applied for a place here?

MILDRED looks down, guilty.

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

MISS CACKLE
Of course.

MISS CACKLE makes a magical gesture. MILDRED and JULIE
disappear...

CUT TO:

47

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 15:35

47

(JULIE, MILDRED)

JULIE

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

MILDRED

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.

MILDRED

No...

(beat)

It's a boarding school.

JULIE

You'd stay here?

MILDRED

Just in the term times...

JULIE can't hide her emotion. MILDRED feels terrible.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

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

JULIE hugs MILDRED.

JULIE

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

MILDRED

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

JULIE

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

MILDRED

I did, didn't I?

JULIE

(nods)

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

JULIE hugs MILDRED. A loving mother-daughter moment.

CUT TO:

48

INT. HALLWAY/NOOK BY STAIRCASE - DAY 1 15:40

48

(BELLA N/S, CHARLOTTE N/S, DRUSILLA N/S, ETHEL, FELICITY, GIRLS N/S, LUCINDA N/S, MAUD, MILDRED)

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?

MILDRED enters.

MAUD (CONT'D)

What did they say?

MILDRED

(still processing
everything that's
happened)

I'm in...

MAUD

(squeals)

Yay!

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

MILDRED

But just on a trial basis.

MAUD hugs MILDRED. 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 Millie.

And MILDRED and MAUD walk off, arm in arm.

CUT TO:

49

INT. MISS CACKLE'S OFFICE - DAY 1 15:45
(JULIE, MISS CACKLE, MISS HARDBROOM)

49

MISS CACKLE hands JULIE a pile of papers:

MISS CACKLE
Prospectus. Reading list. Uniform
requirements.

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

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

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

MISS HARDBROOM waves her fingers and JULIE disappears.

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

MISS CACKLE considers - it's been quite a day...

CUT TO:

50

EXT. CACKLE'S ACADEMY POND - DAY 1 16.00

50

(MAUD, MILDRED) **FROG**

MILDRED 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.

MILDRED

(yells out, to the school
in general)

See you on the first day of term!

FROG

Croak!

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

END OF EPISODE