

Oh JK, You Brilliant Writer! : The Case Behind Ted Tonks

It was Thursday night, July 31st. I sat in my bed with the first book clutched within my hands. Although it was nearly midnight, I had decided to take a trip down “memory lane” so to write and for some reason decided that it would be amusing to reach the part where Harry meets Hagrid right at the time my alarm clock would strike midnight. I never came close.

My eyes suddenly stopped on the middle of page six. I literally screamed. Quickly, I composed myself and paused to see if I had wakened anyone. Thank goodness, I had not. Written on the page, as if waiting for me was:

“ ‘And finally, bird watchers everywhere have reported that the nation’s owls have been behaving very unusually today. Although owls normally hunt at night and are hardly ever seen in daylight, there have been hundreds of sightings of these birds flying in every direction since sunrise. Experts are unable to explain why the owls have suddenly changed their sleeping pattern.’ **The newscaster allowed himself a grin.** ‘Most mysterious. And now, over to Jim McGuffin with the weather. Going to be any more showers of owls tonight, Jim?’

‘Well, **Ted,**’ said the weatherman...” (6, Sorcerer’s Stone, US Edition).

Why, we all know Rowling hates coincidences. So it had to be... It must, I surmised. I could not believe it, but there the name was!

Suddenly, I remembered in Order of the Phoenix:

“‘My dad’s Muggle -born and he’s a right old slob. I suppose it varies, just like with wizards?’” (50, Order of the Phoenix, US Edition).

“but Andromeda married a Muggle -born, Ted Tonks, so – ” (113, Order of the Phoenix, US Edition)

I read the line again “Well, **Ted...**” Nymphadora’s father was on a remote page in Book one!

Now, this make all strike you as a bit anti-climax. So Jahboh? You stammer he’s not even one of the main characters! But to think that Rowling had introduced this character four books before he is actually mentioned again is simply amazing.

I suppose this all stems from the fact that I slightly doubted her in the beginning. In every interview we hear her say, ‘Harry come into my head fully formed’ and other lines about her having everything down. I’ve always taken these phrases to mean the main characters and the general plot outline of the plot came into her head fully formed. Never did I think that back in the early mid 1990’s when she first started to write the words of Book One, she had thought of adding this subtle hint about a character who would appear four books down the line. It is indeed much stealthier than commenting on young Sirius Black a few lines later when he would appear as a major character two books into the future.

Also, this brings even more unanswered questions. Nymphadora then, states that Ted is Muggle-born. This seems to imply that he was born a muggle but then went to

Hogwarts. Or else, she would have simply stated that he was a muggle. Making the bold assumption that Ted went to Hogwarts, it is surprising that he instead chose a muggle profession. Or...are we missing the fact that the Ministry of Magic's influence is deeper than what we previously thought? In other words, does the Ministry have some sort of department that hands out muggle jobs to monitor the muggles? This hints at the character Ted himself. He seems to be a muggle version of Mr. Weasley. The man chooses a plain job over something truly exciting and magical, a job I think most would not want once they learn magic. Now, even if Ted was simply a muggle, it is not evident how Andromeda actually met him. I mean, these kids spend seven years at a school with only people of their kind. It seems highly unlikely that Andromeda would have met Ted unless he was her neighbor. So the question is, is there some sort of business that introduces witches/wizards to muggles and vice versa? Also, I wonder at what type of profession Andromeda has/had. Ack! So many ideas and possibilities!

I must admit my respect of JK Rowling's writing has deepened dramatically (if that's even possible). It is indeed true that none of these books can be read once, but must be returned to over and over. I know of no writer who has been able to write in such an epic scale and to confound and mystify audiences for years (and driving them to think and analyze the books over for ages!). In some ways, I am glad that Book Six will probably not arrive for a few years. This way, we can return to the first few books and attempt to glean out more facts. As for now, belated cheers for JK on her Birthday and thank you for surprising me again and again!

- By Jahboh 8-1-03