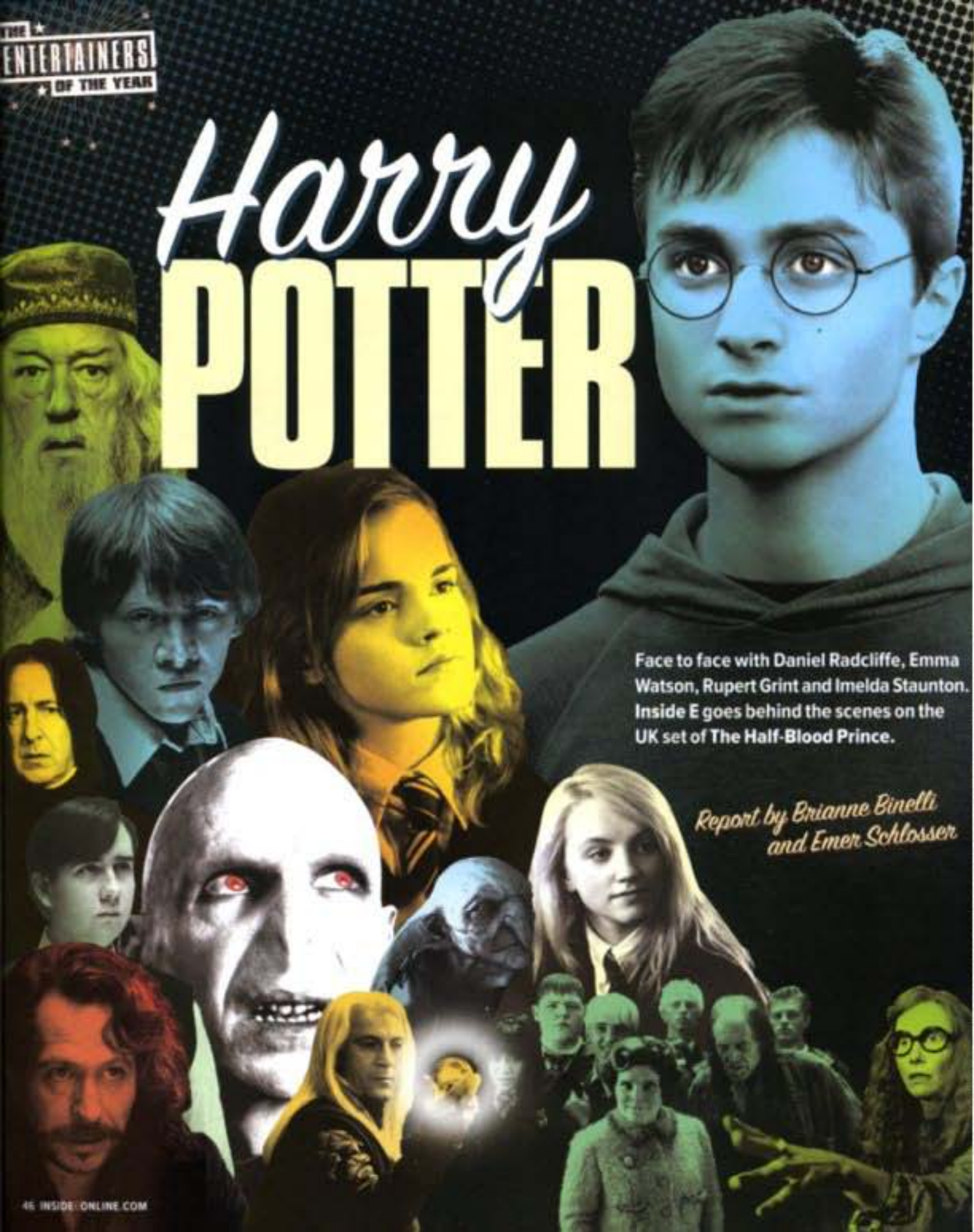


Harry POTTER



Face to face with Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint and Imelda Staunton. Inside E goes behind the scenes on the UK set of *The Half-Blood Prince*.

Report by *Brianne Binelli and Emer Schlosser*

Renegade RADCLIFFE COMING OF AGE ON STAGE

It was a big year for Radcliffe. Aside from *The Order of the Phoenix*, there was the Australian movie *December Boys* and the British TV-movie *My Boy Jack*. And let's not forget: 2007 was the year that Radcliffe dispensed with his clothing in the West End production of *Equus*. Surprisingly, the *Potter* crew supported Radcliffe's decision to appear in the controversial play. "We were very proud of Dan," says *Potter* producer David

Barron, "for making that choice because obviously people focus on the nudity but, excuse the pun, it's a very small part of a very big play, and he actually came of age as an actor, I think, in that play... Daniel has come back already from *Equus* a more mature performer than when he went." We met up with Radcliffe on the set of *Half-Blood Prince*. "I don't think I would be able to develop [as an actor] if I weren't doing other things, to be honest," he says. "I think people assume that if you get a job at the age of 11, you won't ever take it seriously." And Radcliffe is smart enough to realize he may not have an easy road ahead. "This is an industry that can be very fickle and can be perfidious sometimes, and will turn its back on people... We are the realization of these iconic characters, which is incredibly flattering - and we are very, very lucky." - BB



NEVILLE LONGBOTTOM

In *The Sorcerer's Stone*, we were introduced to a pudgy, klutzy little kid who is now 5'10" and only just beginning to gain control of his gangly limbs.

"I started when I was 11, thrown into a Hollywood production with a crew of adults and a cast that had a lot of adults in it, and it was very nerve-wracking at first," says Matthew Lewis. "Neville has kind of grown up like I have as an actor, and that's perfect. It couldn't have been any better really." Neville began as "the clumsy one who always messed stuff up and fell on the floor and got the laughs." (Some of those traits Lewis appears to share with Neville. "I'm terribly forgetful - like, really, really forgetful.") "I love making people laugh," Lewis says, "and that was always a really fun aspect of the film. [Neville] is good friends with Harry, Ron and Hermione, and he's always there trying to help... And then for book seven to come out and for Neville to save the day, it was just totally, I mean, really, really unexpected... I never thought he'd be the hero." Lewis has yet to fully fathom the impact of the *Harry Potter* phenomenon. "To think of it is quite frightening, actually... To be in *Harry Potter*, it's on a different scale entirely, it's beyond scales. It's just incredible... I'm very proud of it. If I hadn't been involved, I don't know what my life would've been like. I really don't." - ES



THE DAVIDS

Face time with *Phoenix* director David Yates and *Potter* producers David Barron and David Heyman.



David Yates



David Barron and David Heyman

Harry Potter is a levitation. As with every *Potter* film, the challenge for *Phoenix* filmmakers was deciding what aspects of the book should be kept and what should be discarded. With *Phoenix*, director "David [Yates] decided he wanted to make the film about Harry," explains producer David Heyman. "This is more Harry's film, the fifth, than any of the films before, and anything that didn't relate to that journey got cast aside." Harry's journey is a lot darker in *Phoenix*, but producer David Barron wasn't worried about skirting around the sensitive issues. "We have to be true to the books... We can't suddenly make *The Teletubbies Take on Voldemort*!" It remains to be seen how the filmmakers will tackle the geographical

challenges posed by the final installment of the series, but Heyman already has another snafu to overcome with *Deathly Hallows*. "We'll have to look at Sirius's mirror, which didn't feature in five but has to find its way into seven." Yates, of course, may not be back to see the problem solved. A director has yet to be chosen for the final film. Heyman admits that even Terry Gilliam is being considered. Perhaps there's another David somewhere. - BB



HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

As Harry and Cho (Katie Leung) exchange a first kiss, a wreath of mistletoe blossoms above their heads. And the mysterious Luna Lovegood (Evanna Lynch) has chillingly beautiful visions vouchsafed only to those who have seen death firsthand. This is the best film so far. Harry finds himself on the cusp of maturity - doubting himself, lost, alone and increasingly angry. "The more you care," he meditates, "the more you have to lose." The film is immaculately composed, and solidly directed, with a cast that obviously relishes the increasing complexities and emotional subtleties of these relationships. The DVD, released December 11, is available in a single-disc and double-disc editions. There are 17 minutes of additional scenes, and even a chance to edit a scene from the film yourself. - Wolfgang Dias



TOTALITARIAN TYRANT

Dolores Umbridge is pretty in pink as Hogwarts' first female Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. It's quite okay to judge a book by its cover sometimes.

Covered head to toe in putrid pink, and looking sickly sweet, Dolores Umbridge, played by Imelda Staunton, is a totalitarian tyrant who's way more nasty than nice. "It was very uncomfortable to be inside that skin," Staunton told us.

In the fifth film's DVD extras, she's described as Freddy Krueger meets Margaret Thatcher. "And yet she has great fervour and passion in what she's doing because she absolutely believes it's going to save everyone... and that's a terrifying and blinkered sort of view."

Like her character, who goes to Hogwarts on behalf of the meddling Ministry of Magic and then tries to take over, Staunton was a Potter rookie joining an established ensemble. She described it as "like being in a jigsaw, [trying] to fit into the story." — ES



UNDER THE SPELL

JK Rowling has it "all in her head" but keeps a respectful distance from the film set.

"Everything about JK Rowling's world is thought-out down to the very last detail," explains Emma Watson (aka Hermione Granger), who exudes the same passion in person as Rowling does on the printed page. "You can pull apart the spells — they're Latin. They actually mean what they're doing. All the names are so interesting, unique and different — and everyone has their own history."

Rowling knows her characters' backstory intimately; just ask Potter producer, David Barron. While filming *The Order of the Phoenix*, the director and producers contacted



Rowling when they realized they needed more names for the Black family tree. "By fax, about 15 minutes later, she sent the family tree," recalls Barron. "She knows it all. She had it all in her head. It was just incredible."

But we're told that Rowling keeps a respectful distance from the filmmaking process. "Unlike many authors," says Barron, "she is able to hold herself slightly at arm's length for quite a bit of the process, and she lets us get on and work on the scripts until it's something we're happy with and proud to show her," explained Barron. As producer David Heyman points out, "it's a very rich fabric that Jo Rowling has given us." — BB



THE CAT'S OUT OF THE BAG

So, Dumbledore is gay. Oh, what a hullabaloo.

JK Rowling answered a question at a press conference, inadvertently revealed that Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore was gay, and public outcry ensued. Emma Watson, who plays Hermione Granger, didn't mince words as she discussed the revelation, while we lounged, coincidentally, in Dumbledore's office.

"This is the 21st century. I just could not believe the amount of fuss," she ranted. "I'd like to think it was just to make a story out of something that wasn't really that big and it's just about selling newspapers... I thought it was horrific."

Oddly enough, about a month before the media storm, Rowling had revealed her little secret to the film producers. "We thought it was just a bit of privity insider information that would probably go no further other than anecdotally in years to come," said Potter producer David Barron. Producers kept the news from Michael Gambon, who plays the powerful wizard, worried it would affect his performance. But, now that the cat's out of the bag and filming has begun on the sixth film, Gambon is already "camping it up" off camera. Barron has assured us that Dumbledore is "not suddenly going to start wearing a dress." — BB

EMMA vs HERMIONE

SNOOTY AND ALOOF?



★ Emma Watson parallels her character, Hermione, in many ways. Both are cerebral and both have been called snooty and aloof. But Watson was far from aloof as she curled up in a director's chair, surrounded by glass orbs, in Dumbledore's office to discuss her heroine.

When asked what theme in the multilayered series speaks to her most, the actress spoke of something close to Hermione's heart. "JK Rowling deals a lot with prejudice and [the magical world's] own version of racism... how Hermione is not from a pure blood heritage... and how things aren't always as they seem."

Oddly enough, Hermione is one of the characters who is exactly as she seems; she can be trusted. "She was forcing [Harry] to let people be there for him and to trust people, because... it's hard for Harry to trust people," the 17-year-old muses. "Looking back on [the films] and seeing how much I've changed... I guess, in a way, that's what people really identify with... we literally are growing up with the characters."

Although the journey is nearing its end, Watson has admitted, contrary to earlier musings, that she hopes to continue acting. "I made a film for the BBC called *Ballet Shoes* during the summer, and I think having an experience outside of *Harry Potter* really convinced me that this is what I want to be doing... That doesn't mean I'm not going to go to university... You know, I'm 17." Hermione, is that you? — BB



The Giggly GRINT

EVERYTHING IS "COOL, COOL, COOL" WITH RUPERT GRINT. BUT IF ANYONE DESERVES TO OVER-USE THAT WORD, IT'S A COOL GUY LIKE THIS ONE.

★ As soon as he got his driver's license, he bought an ice cream truck (complete with sinks and jingles and all). Grint has even got a pool table in his trailer. Perhaps it was being part of such a "cool" film series that led to Grint's coolness. "It's going to be sad, actually, because it does feel like it's coming to an end now. We've got the seventh on its way. It's nearly all over. I'm going to miss it."

Production on the sixth film got underway in

September. "Every film has its own atmosphere, and this one is really, really cool... It's got a dark undertone to it, obviously, because Voldemort is back, and it is quite a scary time, but it's a really cool time. Ron gets a girlfriend, so that's going to be quite cool."

In addition to being cool, Grint seems to have developed quite a reputation as a giggler. "I've always, always had this problem with giggling for no reason at all," he confesses. "It is kind of annoying when you're on the 35th take, and [the director's] groaning, I just can't help it, once I get into it... There was a real problem back in the second film. [Director] Chris Columbus had to take me aside and give me a 'telling off' because it did get a little bit stupid."

Grint isn't the only culprit. His costar, Matthew Lewis, is half the problem. "We try to make each other laugh, which is really bad," says Lewis. "It became a thing, to see if you could make the other person laugh without laughing yourself... I should really stop doing that. I should definitely not admit to it, anyway. We do take it very seriously. Honestly." - ES

★ ★ ★ DVD EXTRAS ★ ★ ★

While Neville Longbottom's Matthew Lewis has barely known a world without DVD features, and clearly thinks they're cool, Imelda Staunton (who plays Ministry of Magic's Dolores Umbridge) is yet to be convinced.

Matthew Lewis, 18:



"I think it's cool for people to watch [the extras] and see that we are normal. I quite enjoyed commenting on stuff because you tend to forget about things... It was fun to reminisce about all the experiences we had off-screen when we were filming... Some of the deleted scenes were quite nice because we spend a long

time doing scenes and you have to appreciate, at the end of the day, that if they don't quite fit in with the story, they can be [cut]. It has to happen and it's a shame, obviously, but that's the way it goes. So it's nice with DVDs nowadays that you can still see these scenes."

Imelda Staunton, 51:



"I don't like it at all. No. I think you should retain, not just the mystery and the magic, but just the story as it is. I think when you start tearing everything apart, you take everything away... I'm afraid I'm the wrong person to talk about DVD extras because I never watch. I know what happens behind scenes and I don't want to watch that. I want to live in that world for two hours and that's all I want to know about. But I understand people outside the business probably find that fascinating."

Regardless of which side of the features fence you sit, you've gotta check out Emma Thompson's deleted scene from *The Order of the Phoenix*. - ES



LUNA THE LYNCHPIN

What's not to love about loony Luna Lovegood?

Evanna Lynch loved the intuitive "space case" so much that she raced to an open casting call and beat some 5,000 hopefuls to become Harry's unlikely confidante in *The Order of the Phoenix*. We met Lynch, herself a major Potter fan, at Leavesden Studios, 30 miles northwest of London. When she was cast as Luna, she was grateful but incredibly nervous. "At the read-through, I was just shaking all the time," she recalls.

Lynch cites Luna as her favorite Potter character. Luna is "really important to Harry. She's the one who just never worries. And she's always so at ease with everyone, and she's ready to listen. I think offloading onto her helps Harry with a calmer mindset."

This is the 16-year-old's first professional acting gig. Even though she knows her character well, she humbly admits that she still has some work to do to produce the "perfect Luna." In fact, she admits with a giggle to fast-forwarding through her scenes on the DVD. "I sound like I'm on helium or something." - BB



HARRY POTTER GIFT SET: YEARS 1-5

Hold on to your broomsticks, here's the way back to Hogwarts. The first five films of the groundbreaking series are packaged in a cute little trunk. The cool bonus materials include a DVD game, five collectible bookmarks, 16 trading cards and a total of nine documentaries and TV specials. - BB



HORMONES AT HOGWARTS

Laying a 'wet one' on Harry!

Hogwarts is like any highschool (except for the flying and the spells): the opposite sex is often way more interesting than the set curriculum (be it math and English or transfiguration and divination). Possibly the most talked-about aspect of the fifth film was Harry's first kiss.

Katie Leung, who plays Harry's crush, Cho Chang, confessed that the smooch was a little stressful. There was "a lot of pressure," she says, "but it went very smoothly, and I'm very happy with the outcome... I'm just very proud to be known as the girl who kissed Harry Potter, you know, if it's the last thing I do." Hopefully the pressure won't be as great for Bonnie Wright, who plays Ginny Weasley, Harry's *Half-Blood* crush.

Harry, of course, is not the only one getting girlfriends. His pal Ron also finds romance in *The Half-Blood Prince*. While Rupert Grint said that getting a girlfriend is "cool," he didn't seem so excited about the blossoming bond between Ron and Emma Watson's Hermione. "I'm a bit nervous about where

Hermione and Ron sort of end up... It's going to be a bit awkward on film. We're just really good friends. It's going to be awkward, but I think we'll manage."

Off-screen puberty is obviously helping to inform on-screen romance. Hormones are flying both on-screen and off. "Dan [Radcliffe] is now 18 years old and he's had relationships," says producer David Heyman. "What's exciting is that he's able to draw upon his own experiences of having his first relationship and what that feels like and how awkward it is when you like someone and you don't know if they like you... The hypnotic quality that women have on men, and girls have on boys, never really goes away... And in the sixth film it's taken one step further... it brings some people together but also pushes some apart."

But there's one romance that will never come to fruition, much to the dismay of Evanna Lynch, who plays spacey noodle Luna Lovegood. "I actually thought [Luna and Dumbledore] would be such a good couple together," laughed Lynch. "If only Dumbledore was 100 years younger and alive, they would be perfect. I put that out to JK Rowling, and as we now know, that's not ever..." - ES

★ THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE ★

The 6th film will be a light "breather" between the emotional 5th and the epic 7th.



The final book is out, the fifth DVD is being released December 11, and filming of the penultimate Potter film is already underway. *The Half-Blood Prince* is "a very different story," says director David Yates, who also helmed *Order of the Phoenix*. "It's a much funnier film."

Yates' cast members agree. "Reading the script," says Matthew Lewis, who plays Neville Longbottom, "was so painful because you just hurt from laughing so much." But not everyone on board is as excited about the lightness and laughter. "I think the script's great and I think it's going to be a really great film," says Daniel Radcliffe, "but I'm just one of these people who always lean toward the dark side."

"I know Emma [Watson] and Rupert [Grint] really like the lighter stories... and I know Rupert particularly is going to have a field day on this one because he's got fantastic comic timing and he'll be able to use all of that to great comedic effect with his relationship with Lavender Brown. But I'm actually going to miss doing all the really morbid stuff." To balance things up a bit, the sixth film does, however, take a much deeper look into Lord Voldemort's shady past. - ES

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