

Possible Alternative Leads?

Actual Lead

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much.

1. When Mr. and Mrs. Dursley woke up on the dull, gray Tuesday our story starts, there was nothing about the cloudy sky outside to suggest that strange and mysterious things would soon be happening all over the country.
2. It was on the corner of the street that he noticed the first sign of something peculiar—a cat reading a map. For a second, Mr. Dursley didn't realize what he had seen—then he jerked his head around to look again. There was a tabby cat standing on the corner of Privet Drive, but there wasn't a map in sight.
3. Mr. Dursley was the director of a firm called Grunnings, which made drills. He was a big, beefy man with hardly any neck, although he did have a large mustache. Mrs. Dursley was thin and blonde and had nearly twice the usual amount of neck, which came in very useful as she spent so much of her time craning over garden fences, spying on the neighbors. The Dursleys had a small son called Dudley and in their opinion there was no finer boy anywhere.
4. The Dursleys had everything they wanted, but they also had a secret, and their greatest fear was that somebody would discover it.
5. "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 ever 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?"
6. Albus Dumbledore didn't seem to realize that he had just arrived in a street where everything from his name to his boots was unwelcome.

All quotations are from Chapter One of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic, 1997).