

“Just keep up with the rat tonic,” he replied. “I’m sure he’ll perk up.”

Ron didn’t look entirely convinced, but he didn’t say anything more as Harry started getting ready for bed. Harry only felt guilty for a minute for excluding him. Ron wouldn’t understand.

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Everyone was excited for their first Defence Against the Dark Arts lesson. From what they’d heard around the school, Professor Lupin actually knew his stuff; no chance of another duffer like Lockhart. Harry hadn’t properly spoken to him yet, but he still couldn’t shake that strange feeling like the professor was familiar. It made something in his chest tie itself in knots, and had Harry squirming when he was sat behind his desk staring at the new professor.

The feeling was pushed aside when they were led to the staff room, Lupin gently suggesting that Snape vacate the area. The Defence professor seemed incredibly amused by Neville’s boggart transformation. Maybe Snape had already pissed off the new staff member. Harry wouldn’t put it past him.

Wand in hand, Harry braced himself to face the boggart, only for Lupin to step in front of him. The boggart turned into a floating silver orb, shining mysteriously — until Lupin turned it into a cockroach. Was that the moon? Why was Lupin afraid of the moon?

No one seemed to notice that Harry hadn’t faced the Boggart, too busy chattering about their own vanquished fears. Harry almost said something to Lupin, stayed back and demanded answers, but he decided against it. Maybe he was overthinking things. Possibly class was just about to run over, and Lupin wanted to wrap things up.

Harry kept to himself as he walked down to dinner, letting Ron and Hermione’s bickering wash over him. Professor Lupin hadn’t said anything about seeing Harry before, or knowing him from anywhere. Harry was probably imagining things.

Still, something didn’t feel right. There was *something* about the man that Harry couldn’t put his finger on.