

about Sirius Black. It was only fair, after all; if they were going to be hanging around him, they were in just as much danger. He was a little insulted at Hermione's assumption that he'd go seeking Black out, but then he remembered the compulsion charm the goblins had removed, and realised that before he probably would've done exactly that.

Conversation soon turned to Hogsmeade, making Harry remember for the first time since getting to Diagon Alley that he never got his permission slip signed. He probably wouldn't be allowed to go even if he had.

As Ron and Hermione tried to cheer him up about not being able to go — well, Hermione tried, Ron mostly gushed about how great Hogsmeade was supposed to be — Harry let his thoughts wander, his gaze drifting to the man asleep opposite him. Professor R J Lupin. He looked familiar. Perhaps Harry had seen him around Diagon Alley? He couldn't place it, it was just a feeling, like he *knew* this man. Even as he got dragged back into conversation, he couldn't look away from him for long. Part of Harry hoped the professor would wake up, then he might be able to find out if they knew each other.

Then the dementor attacked, and Harry stopped caring about Professor Lupin at all.

He was still shaking when he finally got Madam Pomfrey to let him go back to the feast, barely sparing a thought to the sorting he'd miss, or even Hagrid's new teaching job. All he could think about was that awful, awful scream...

"Is it true, Potter? You *actually* fainted?" Malfoy jeered as they all headed for their dorms.

"Shove off, Malfoy," Ron said with a scowl. When Harry looked up, Malfoy's eyes met his. For the briefest moment it looked like he was actually *concerned*.

"I'm fine, Malfoy," he retorted acidly, turning away towards the staircase. No, he was seeing things. Just because they'd had one half-decent conversation, didn't mean Malfoy suddenly gave a damn about him.

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When the feast was finally over, Remus rose from his seat at the head table, thinking longingly of his bed in his new quarters. First, however, he had to make one stop. He couldn't help himself.

His feet led the way seemingly without his consent, his eyes roaming the all-too-familiar corridors. He never thought he'd be back at Hogwarts again. Certainly never thought he'd be allowed to *teach*. It was a dream come true.

He ignored the ache in his chest, the voices of times past — of *friends* past — echoing in his ears as he walked. Every corridor, every classroom, they all held memories. Even the good ones made him want to howl with pain.

He stopped outside a nondescript black door, taking a steadying breath before knocking. "Enter," a voice drawled, sending another stab of pain through Remus' heart. He pushed the door open, meeting stony black eyes. "Lupin." His name was spat like a curse, but he refused