

yearbook to begin with... it was better just to not. He was keeping too many secrets from them already; what was one more?

“Anyway, enough about me. What’s Hogsmeade like? Where did you go?” As Ron emptied his pockets into Harry’s lap, showering him with sweets, the pair gushed about the wonders of the wizarding village. Harry kept up his fake smile the entire time, unwrapping a chocolate frog for distraction. They sounded like they’d had the time of their lives.

“Hey, I’ll be right back. Forgot my jumper,” he muttered when they all got up to leave for the feast, darting for the dormitory stairs. Up in his room, he leant against his bedpost and took a deep breath. They didn’t mean to rub it in. It wasn’t their fault he couldn’t go. He should be happy they were on good terms; it was an improvement from having them yell at each other about Crookshanks.

“Harry.” He jumped, but it was only Neville, a knowing look on his face. “Alright?”

“Yeah, just needed a minute.” He grabbed his jumper off his bed just to have an excuse, and so missed Neville reaching into his robe pocket.

“Here, got you something.” Neville held out a hand. In his palm was a silver dish, with what looked like a miniature bonfire stacked inside, waiting to be lit. “Figured, since you couldn’t join us tonight...”

Harry took the little fire, glancing up at Neville with perhaps the most genuine grin he’d had all day. “Thanks, Nev. This is really great.”

Neville blushed, ducking his head. “You’re welcome. Now come on, I’m starving.”

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Harry laid awake on the floor of the Great Hall for a long time, surrounded by snoring people in identical purple sleeping bags. He couldn’t wrap his head around it.

Sirius Black had broken into the school.

The same Sirius Black who had been his father’s *best friend* in school, and was now trying to kill Harry. Who was the reason his parents were dead.

The very same Sirius Black who Snape clearly thought Lupin was helping get into the castle. Harry didn’t believe that for a second — no one could fake the grief he’d seen in Lupin’s eyes earlier that day. He was still heartbroken by his friend’s betrayal.

He remembered the other night, how even Malfoy had been worried about Harry wandering around after curfew. He’d been so sure Black wouldn’t be able to reach him then, so confident in his safety. This... this changed things.

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Remus crossed the corridor, guilt gnawing his gut, when all of a sudden there was a hand on his shoulder and his back was slammed against the stone wall. “*Swear to me,*” Severus