

“I am assuring Albus that I saw no signs of outside influence in your mind, other than the obvious. No memories of secretly practicing Dark Arts, or torturing animals,” his lips quirked briefly, “but as he believes me unaware of the horcrux within you, I suspect he just assumes I do not know what to look for.” His frown returned. “You must not let this derail your plans. Your public divide from the headmaster is inevitable; we can only hope that it comes at a time when public opinion is in your favour. Leave manipulating Albus to me.”

“If you’re sure.” Harry didn’t like the idea of just leaving that whole thing alone, but there was little else he could do. He would lose so much ground if he pretended to turn back into the headmaster’s docile little puppet. And his sanity, as well, before long.

“I think we are finished for the night, Potter,” Snape declared, and now Harry looked closer he could see the stress in the furrow of his brow, the tension in his shoulders.

“Yeah. Yeah, of course.” He scrambled to grab his bag. “I... I’m sorry I saw those memories, sir. I’m sorry for what my father did to you.”

Snape’s return smile was a twisted, bitter thing. “Those are not your sins to apologise for, Harry,” he replied evenly.

“I’m sorry all the same.” Then Harry left, his heart heavy, wondering why no one had ever told him his father was such a shithead.

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The first thing he did upon reaching the dormitory was ward himself in his bed curtains, and pull out his mirror. “Sirius Black.”

Sirius responded in moments, and the bright grin he greeted Harry with dropped as soon as he saw the look on his godson’s face. “What’s wrong, pup?”

“Is Remus there?” Harry asked, and Sirius frowned.

“Yes... Did you need to talk to him?” Harry could see the background shift as Sirius got up, no doubt to go find his friend.

“Both of you, if you’re not busy.”

Soon Harry could see both men in the surface of the mirror, staring worriedly at him. “Is everything alright, cub?”

Harry told them; about his Legilimency lesson, and the scene he’d watched in Snape’s memories. As he spoke, he watched both of them grow paler.

“Harry...” Sirius began, and Harry glared at him.

“Don’t patronise me,” he warned. “How could— he wasn’t even *doing* anything. He was just *there*.”