

“Yes, I’ll be with you to take more when I need it. Thank you, Severus.” He took the goblet from the dark-haired man, who gave Lupin one last unreadable look, then swept from the classroom, shutting the door behind him. Lupin looked at the goblet, then grimaced, knocking it all back in one. “Ugh. Pity he can’t make it taste any better.”

“Professor, what?”

“Oh, not to worry, Harry. I have an ongoing medical issue, Severus — ah, Professor Snape — was kind enough to brew the only potion that helps. I’ll be right as rain. I’m very lucky to be working with him, you know; not many Potions Masters are up to the task, it’s a rather tricky brew.”

Harry’s mind flashed back to the yearbook. “He was top of your class.”

Lupin’s mouth made a funny half-smirk. “Indeed he was. Though Lily almost beat him to it. I thought he’d have a heart attack when he found out how close it had been.”

“You were friends?” Harry asked, eyebrows raised. Lupin almost dropped the goblet.

“Friends? Oh, I don’t know if I’d say that. We were... things are complicated, Harry, when you’re Gryffindors and Slytherins. Even when you’re no longer students.”

Unbidden, Harry’s mind flashed to blond hair and silver eyes. Heat rose in his cheeks. He understood that kind of complicated.

“I’m sorry, Harry, but perhaps we can pick this conversation up another time? I’m afraid it’s taken rather a lot out of me.” Lupin set down the goblet, and Harry stood. The professor placed a tentative hand on Harry’s shoulder. “I am always happy to talk to you about your parents. I’m sorry I didn’t sooner, but I thought someone already had. I... well, I assumed you’d chosen to have nothing to do with me.” He gave a small, self-deprecating shrug. “Since that’s not the case... you used to call me Uncle Remus once, Harry. I’m not asking you to do so again, but... perhaps we could be friends?”

Harry studied the man; the first person in his life who had offered to tell him about his parents, who had really *known* them. A man who, under different circumstances, Harry would have grown up calling Uncle Remus, loving like family. “I’d like that,” he said eventually, offering a hesitant smile.

Lupin beamed.

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Harry was back in the Gryffindor common room by the time Ron and Hermione returned from Hogsmeade, pockets bulging with all kinds of treats. “Oh, y’know, quiet,” he said when Hermione asked him how his day had gone. “Been doing homework.”

He could’ve told them about his visit to Professor Lupin, but he stayed quiet. To do that would have meant explaining the yearbook, and Sirius Black, and *why* he was looking at the