

Regrets

by sunny33

Two women mourn a man they both loved in different ways.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: The characters and settings belong to J. K. Rowling. I just borrowed them for a bit.

Crystal pearls glisten in the moonlight as they form a trail of grief and regret down the young witch's face. She gazes sightlessly out from the top of the Astronomy Tower at the silver-painted landscape before her. The older woman stands silently observing the dissolution of her charge's hard-won defences.

"Why? Why did he have to die?" She raises her fists as she rages at the unheeding gods above. The fickle wind blows her hair into a wild tempest of curls befitting her mood. Her scarlet cloak billows in remembrance of the man she has lost. "Why him?" she sobs brokenly.

Her companion wraps her in the comfort of loving arms and croons softly as they share their despair. "He always knew he could never survive the war. That he lived as long as he did was a testament to his skill as a spy and his intelligence." The catch in her voice reveals the depth of her sorrow as memories of her sardonic colleague envelop her for precious moments.

A young first year glaring suspiciously at the Sorting Hat. A defiant teenager arguing his case with Albus after near death at the hands of a prankster and a werewolf. An inconsolable young man weeping for the woman he had loved throughout his childhood – mercilessly slain at the hands of a madman. A lonely spy avoiding any advances of friendship for fear of breaking his cover.

"I never told him that I loved him." The younger witch looks into her mentor's eyes as she admits her true feelings for the first time to another.

"You loved him? How? When?"

"I don't know how or when. It just happened. He meant more to me than I knew. Until he died. Damn him! Why did he just give in like that?" she cries. Anger flares fruitlessly. Too late to tell him she cared... too late to hold him... too late to give him hope... just too late.

"I never had a chance to tell him that I saw him as the son I never had." The older woman regrets holding back – not taking the risk of rejection.

"Really? You saw him as a son?"

"I suppose I have for years. He never had anyone to care for him in that way. You know now about his parents and his early childhood. No-one was there to defend him. Albus was woefully biased. I have to admit that I was also. I only realised his true nature after he became a spy. By then it was difficult to penetrate his barriers. He became so adept at shielding his emotions that most believed he had none. They were wrong. He was a passionate man who felt hurts and rejections deeply. Just because he didn't show it did not mean he was unaffected. I wish I had reached out to him. I cared. He just did not know it." She wipes away a tear of unfulfilled affection.

They stand together immersed in their respective cloaks of sadness. Neither notices the faint chill in the air dissipate as the ghost of Severus Snape leaves the two women who mourn his passing.

No-one knew ghosts could weep.

A/N: Somehow, I ended up challenging ladyinthecloak to a No Comma Duel. Notsosaintly came along for the ride, and now we have a whole new category! No sex in this one, NSS, as I had already thought it up before you guys changed the rules. :P

Thanks to the lovely LITC for checking for mistakes.