

# Please Stay

*by tatiana*

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*Chapter 1 of 1*

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*\*anti-litigation charm\* Not mine, not making any money, don't sue.*

I roll over and find myself, once again, face to face with this wizard -this man- that I share my bed with. Every now and again, I journey down the path of wondering what is keeping me from fleeing and returning to the life I once knew.

How long have I been here? I stopped counting long ago because it is pointless. In the beginning, the days were all a blur to me and still remain hazy in my mind. The nights were uneasy and disturbed by nightmares - one after the next, waking me in the darkness only to leave me longing for my childhood friends.

My childhood friends.

Sometimes, if I close my eyes long enough, I can still see their faces in the most quiet corners of my mind. The passing of time is slowly fading my memories and I wonder, if I were to hear their voices or their laughter, would I recognize them? I'm *almost* certain that I would...

I snuggle closer to him and reach out, watching as shimmering strands of the palest blonde hair slip between my fingertips like the finest sand. Unless he has it fastened back with a ribbon, his hair tickles my cheek whenever he bows his head to kiss me. It makes me laugh, which makes him smile.

I crave his smile, it shows a gentle side of him that I like to think belongs to me alone, even for the briefest of moments. I see the generosity, gentleness, and love in him, but only because I have taken the time to look.

But to see the good is to see the bad, and as they go hand in hand, you must accept them both. I am by no means disillusioned, for I know what lies beneath the surface of his indulging smile. The same wizard that is so frequently consumed by his need for forgiveness still harbors that side that is often arrogant, hateful, and filled with malice.

I know my place, I am but a spoil of war, too comfortable in my new existence to ever go back to what was - even now that I have been given the opportunity.

I'm a realist though, I know that my life outside of here would never be the same. They know what has happened to me at the hands of our enemy and already I can hear the whispers and feel the pitying stares. However, I could not deny nor defend their accusations of betrayal, because once upon a time, I was his prisoner.

Yes, I know, I'm supposed to be the smart and sensible one. Logic dictates that I should have ran when I had the chance, but I hesitated for just a moment as I stood on the threshold of the Manor that rainy morning, with my bags at my feet.

*"Please stay."*

Never were there two humbler words whispered from this notoriously proud wizard. I knew at that moment that I could not bring myself to return to such uncertainty.

It was neither a triumph for him, nor a disappointment for me, it was simply the way it should be.

I know that he is not in love with me, and I am not in love with him. I care for him deeply, but to be in love with someone means giving all of yourself, and there are some secrets that I am not ready to let go of.

Ours is a relationship of mutual understanding and respect, forged from sheer desperation. Still, with him I am so much more than the resident brainiac of Gryffindor Tower or one-third of the 'Golden Trio'. His attention is mine and mine alone. My knowledge is valued rather than ridiculed, and I am beautiful to him. Although it does feel odd to regard a place that I once considered hell to now be my home.

I tug sharply on the lock of hair that is twisted around my small finger, and he stirs from his sleep. I watch as he turns towards me beneath the heavy duvet, sleepy eyes fluttering open for just a moment before falling shut again. I can feel the softness of his fingertips lazily trace the swell of my breast, coming to rest on the curve of my hip. As if he knows my thoughts are of him, his fingers tighten possessively - but only for a moment.

It doesn't have to make sense to anyone but us because in the end, we both know that I belong here, with him.