

Hiding the Truth

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An abusive relationship always has a starting event. A darkfic explaining the beginning of Tobias and Eileen Snape's unhappy marriage.

Chapter One

Chapter 1 of 1

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Tobias Snape had not always been a cruel man. He at one time had been young, headstrong, and eager to make a name for himself in his underprivileged, industrial town. He had met his beautiful wife when he was eighteen and she was seventeen, both fresh out of school and looking to start their new lives. Eileen had always been the quiet type...not quick to talk about herself but always eager to listen to his stories. So he told her everything about himself, his life, his family, his dreams. It was because he had told her so much about himself that he could not forgive her when he found out about her... abnormality.

Eileen had left the wizarding world for so many reasons. So many of her pure-blood friends and family had followed Grindelwald, and she didn't want to be associated with them. Some of her closest friends at Hogwarts had been Muggle-born, and she had never understood the prejudices in favor of blood purity. Taking only some clothing, and of course her wand, she left her childhood home and began working in nearby Manchester. Working in a pub to pay the bills, she led a quiet life...nothing like the privileged life she had left behind. And she was happy. The blue-collar men who came into the shop were coarse, but respectful. She met Tobias at the shop; he would stop on his way to work to gulp down a cup of coffee and would stop after work to drink several beers. The longer he came to the bar, the more often he would try to sit near her and chat her up. She noticed that her tips began getting bigger and bigger, until he was tipping her about one hundred percent. Finally, he had slipped her a note between the bills asking her to join him at a movie that weekend. *The Curse of Frankenstein* would never be her favorite film, but she would always remember that first date fondly.

The Snapes' marriage had begun well enough. Eileen convinced Tobias to elope, and they had a small ceremony at the local magistrate's office. She had met his family several times, but never brought him home to meet hers. In fact, Eileen had never intended to tell him about her magical past. She kept her wand around like most people keep a gun in the house...hidden in the bedside table, loaded and ready to fight off burglars. On days she was particularly tired, she would use it to clean the house while Tobias was at work, or to change the color of the walls on days she didn't particularly feel like painting. But never in front of Tobias and never very often.

July 1959

Her birthday in 1959 is to be a special one...she is three months pregnant and can't wait to tell Tobias. She wants to look her best and goes about Transfiguring an old dress into something pretty. She is in the middle of this when Tobias comes home early to surprise her. He walks into their room to find her waving a stick and speaking in gibberish. The dress changes from pink to blue repeatedly. He hears his wife giggle to herself and whisper, "Just like Aurora!"

There has to be some sort of explanation. Some newfangled housewife ability to change the colors of a dress. Maybe this is that fabric he has seen some of the nicer ladies wear...shot silk, he thinks Eileen calls it...the fabric that changes colors when it moves. And maybe that stick is just a knitting needle and she is contemplating a wrap to go with the pretty dress. That had to be it. What else could it possibly be?

He shuffles nervously in the doorway. She looks up at him, gasps, and drops her wand. "Tobias, you're... home early..."

He reveals a bouquet of flowers from behind his back and hands them to her. "Happy Birthday, Eileen."

"Thanks, Toby," she responds, eyes full of fear.

"New dress?"

She pauses, knowing that either she has to tell him the truth or she has to lie very quickly and very effectively. But she doesn't want to lie. For so long she had been keeping this outrageous secret from her husband, the man she loves dearly; he loves her, and she prays he won't be terribly angry at her.

"Toby, love, I'm a witch."

He blinks at her, dumbfounded. Then, he begins to guffaw, shaking his head in gentle admonishment. "I told you to buy yourself something pretty for tonight, Eileen. You don't have to lie to me if it was too expensive...I don't mind."

"I'm not lying to you, Toby. I've never lied to you."

"No, you haven't. In fact you've never told me anything. Obviously." He has stopped laughing. In fact, he looks terrified. Terrified and angry. His entire world has just changed, and his brain can neither comprehend nor compartmentalize what he has just been told. As almost a man possessed, he walks towards her, eyes flashing with rage. Eileen has never seen him like this.

"What do you mean 'I'm a witch,' Eileen? What are you trying to tell me? What..."

"*Langlock!*" she screams, wand pointed at his face. He tries to talk, but can only make guttural noises.

"Now, Tobias, listen to me. This isn't so bad! Remember when the roof needed repairs and we couldn't afford it? I was able to fix it...that's why it was so cheap! I only had to buy shingles! This could help us...*has helped us* in so many ways..."

As she trails off, she tries to make eye contact with him, but he is looking off far beyond her, at something not even in the room. He eventually turns his head, and looking her square in the eyes, starts stalking towards her. He is furious, the set of his jaw alone asking how she dared keep something like this from him! He isn't so angry about the witch part, in fact he honestly can't even comprehend it, but he is definitely reeling from the idea that his Eileen could keep something this massive from him when he had opened up so much of himself to her. Seeing red, and without realizing what is happening, he strikes her across the mouth.

Her head snaps to the side. Claspings her hand to her face, she looks at him with tears in her eyes...tears of pain and shock. Tobias has never hit her before. Before she knows it, he is raining down slaps and punches. His face is contorted in rage...made that much more terrifying by the fact that he can't yell. She collapses to the floor, shielding her womb from him as he begins kicking her in the side.

"Tobias! Stop! I'm pregnant!"

His eyes widen at this. A baby? What he has just done finally registers. He looks at Eileen, taking in the damage. Her face and arms are bruised, and she is wiping blood from her lip. He tries to speak but whatever she had done to him is still in effect. She reaches across the floor for her wand and removes the hex. He falls to the floor, cowering away from her.

"I'm sorry, Tobias. I only wanted to make you listen. I didn't want you to yell at me."

"Eileen..."

"Toby, let me finish. Yes, I'm a witch. I'm not the only one. I come from a family of witches and wizards. I was sent to school in Scotland until right before I met you. Things are bad in my family and our world, and I had to leave. I didn't want to live in that world. And then I met you, and things were going so well. I never had a boyfriend, and you were so sweet. I didn't want to ruin it by telling you I was a witch. I thought I could hide it from you, and that we could be happy. And now we're having a child! It's everything I've ever wanted."

Tobias can't believe what he is hearing. His wife is a witch. She had run away from a dangerous life and now is having his child. Would this child be safe? Would this danger affect him? Would he be like him or... like her?

Betrayal. That's the word that keeps going through his head. His wife has betrayed him by keeping something so much a part of her from him. He still isn't sure what to make of it. But he doesn't like that she had kept it from him.

"Tobias, please say something."

"So this child, will it be... like you?"

"In all probability."

"Then when were you going to tell me, Eileen? How much longer were you going to lie to me?"

Tears begin to fall from her eyes in earnest. She hadn't really looked at it as lying to him; in fact she generally had tried not to think about this eventual situation at all.

"I'm sorry, Toby."

"Listen to me, Eileen. I don't want to speak of this again. Ever. You may be a witch, but you will not be a witch in *my* house. Destroy your... wand. Whatever it is that you have to do to it, do it. I'm going to go downstairs, now. I will see you downstairs at seven for dinner."

He rises, walking out of the room without looking at her. She continues to weep, knowing their marriage will never be as strong.

The shock of hearing Tobias enter the room had caused her to ruin the dress...it hangs there, a lifeless purple color. And certainly not anything that would look good on her. She throws it in the back of their wardrobe and pulls out a plain, black dress. Finding a hat with a short veil, she arranges her hair and hat to cover the worst of the bruising. The bleeding from her lip has stopped, and as painful as it is, she puts on her lipstick. She wears black from that day forth.

She finds a loose floorboard in the bedroom and hides her wand there. She has heard that witches separated for too long from their wands fall ill. She thinks of her unborn child and how much she wants it to have a happy childhood, and that if it means having to hide who she is, she will. She descends in time to leave for dinner, knowing her marriage has changed forever. She fears for her unborn child, wondering if his life will be sorrowful now because of her attempt to keep the truth from her husband. She hopes this is the only time Toby will strike her, but resigns herself to the fact that it will probably happen again. Looking in the mirror one last time, she straightens her veil, leaves the room, and descends to meet her husband.

AN: Thank you so much to my beta, tonksinger. She is the only reason this story might be worth reading.