

Wait For Me...

by *BulletTimeScully*

A stolen moment between two desperate souls...

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Chapter 1 of 1

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He cradled her face in his hands and pressed his cheek to her forehead. There was a tremor in his voice as he whispered, "Wait for me...?"

So much was said with those three simple words. Although he would never admit it, she knew that he needed her to be there when he returned, that he needed her to be the Light that pulled him back from the Darkness, the salvation that kept his soul from succumbing to the blackness.

She did not dare open her mouth to speak for fear that she would ask him to stay, even when she knew he could not. Instead, she leaned into him, saying with her actions what she could not say with words. *Don't go*, her mind screamed as she wrapped her arms around him. *Stay here with me, where I know you're safe...*

"I cannot, little one," he told her, knowing the thoughts that were racing through her head. He tightened his arms around her and inhaled her sweet scent of lavender and vanilla. "The consequences of staying are far worse than the consequences of heeding the Call." He winced as another flash of pain pulsed through his forearm.

"I must go."

"Please..." she breathed as he gently pulled away, "please come back to me."

He placed one long finger under her chin and tilted her face towards his. His lips pressed against hers in a soft, chaste kiss. "As long as you are here waiting... I will always come back."

Her hands came up to twine in his dark hair as she pulled him back for another kiss, this one full of desperation and fear. She looked up to him when she finally pulled away and her voice wavered slightly as she said, "Then I have nothing to fear... for I will be here, waiting, for as long as it takes. Forever."

Something in his eyes changed as the words left her mouth, a flash of something she had not seen before. A small smile touched the edges of his lips as he took her hand and pressed them to her cool skin. Catching her gaze once more, he spoke in a voice barely above a whisper, "Forever, then... my love."

And then he was gone in a swirl of black robes. He left her clasping at her chest, desperately attempting to control the wild beating of her heart as her mind tried to wrap itself around his parting words.

He loved her.

In that moment, Hermione realized that she had never spoken any truer words than the ones she had just spoken to Severus. She would wait for him for as long as it took. She would stand with him, proudly by his side, his Light against the Darkness. She would be the healer of his body, the protector of his soul, and the guardian of his heart.

Forever.

~Finis

A/N: It is what it is. Comments are welcome!