

Sometimes

by anonymouth

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Rodolphus muses about his wife: the Night, daughter of original emptiness...

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He loved Bellatrix. Had always loved Bellatrix. Had always been happy just to be in her presence, to bask in the self-confidence and assurance that radiated from her. But he knew her, perhaps more than she knew herself. He had watched her for long enough to know her act. Or acts. Knew that self-confidence and arrogance was merely one aspect of her persona that she allowed to radiate more than others. No one else looked closely enough to see the swirl of other emotions underneath the craziness of her eyes. No one else knew that, sometimes, Bellatrix Black-Lestrange had what most would label distinctly normal desires, and sometimes when he looked at her in the dead of night, there would be a soft smile lingering that he knew had nothing to do with dreams of The Dark Lord and her sworn fealty to him. Those were the times when they had spent the whole day together, sometimes doing nothing more exciting than lazily practicing their harmless hexes in the back garden. They would lie next to each other, then, and speak of hopes and dreams, as if they were still a possibility, as if they were still seventeen and their lives hadn't already passed by in a blur of duels and the screaming silence of Azkaban. Those nights, she would curl into his chest, and he would hold her close, but not too tight, and he would close his eyes and bury his face in her hair, relishing this fleeting, tenuous grasp that he had on an untamable force.

There were some days where she was completely maniacal, and even her sister didn't escape her wrath. Those days, if she looked at him at all, there was no mistaking the venom in her eyes. Sometimes those days would turn into tortuous nights, where even without a cross word from him, she would pounce, tearing into him wildly, verbally and physically, and he had no doubt that on those nights she didn't even register that it was him she was attacking.

There were some nights when they would return from a raid or a party, and she would be on a high. It would affect him, too, but the power and the pain and the screams seemed to raise her to new heights of lust-fuelled depravity, and the longer it went on, the more her desire grew. On those nights, she would be practically devouring him before they returned home; sometimes they didn't make it home at all. On those nights, he merely thanked Merlin that he was present at the time because while he knew that she wanted him on those nights, if he wasn't around he knew that she could just as easily want someone else.

Sometimes, she wouldn't return home for days; it was these times that really played with his mind, tested his resolve not to mind that he had essentially married the wind. He couldn't be possessive; he refused to bow to pressure to contain her, for if he did that, she wouldn't be the woman he married, but on the occasions where the first time he'd set eyes on her since the last weekly meeting was in the next one, he had to question whether, perhaps, she thought him a fool. But almost as soon as his thoughts turned as dark as his wife's soul, she would appear next to him and smile and take his hand as shyly as she had when they first met. She would giggle, then laugh and start to dance as carefree as she had all those years ago, when the world they inhabited now was a distant dream rather than a wide awake nightmare. She would look at him and know who he was and treat him so tenderly that he almost forgot that he never really had her completely. He held no illusions as to who – or what – his wife loved more, if you could call blind devotion love, but on these times, he revelled in the illusion created by Bella for him.

The others would sometimes ridicule him; his brother would goad him; they all had perfect, silent, pure-blood wives who looked after their brilliant, bratty children, and what

did he have? But he would let them, and he never retaliated because yes, they had picture perfect lives, but as for him... well, he was married to the Forces of Nature, which came from Chaos itself, and sometimes... sometimes, she would remember that she was married to him, too. He couldn't ask for more. Some would say that she could only be compared to Night – perhaps even was Night – daughter of Chaos. Night, from whom came such things as torture and shortness of human life. Night, daughter of the original emptiness. But he would say that yes, whilst she was dark, she was not innately evil; such pain and suffering was already a given in life; she just mastered the control of its implementing, rather than succumb to its rule.

But there were some times, when he thought that being with Bellatrix – well, not so much being with her as loving her as foolishly as he did – was akin to torture, death by a thousand cuts, or perhaps just twenty-four because after the fifteenth cut, his heart would have been lost and the rest of the cuts applied to an unfeeling, unmoving corpse, until there would be nothing left of him but a blood-soaked torso and a collection of limbs that used to feel. Yes, he sometimes thought this, but then most times, he didn't care. Perhaps he had received the fifteenth cut long ago to a heart that had never, truly, been his own.

A/N: A little musing that popped into my head after reading some Greek Mythology and a grisly execution directive! Twenty-four cuts was a genuine method of execution – the fifteenth cut would remove the heart, apparently... bit of light trivia there!