

So Cold

by Rose of the West

Lucius stands at an ending and a beginning.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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He watches her do the things that must be done for a patient who just passed. She says the proper spells and gently cleans the body. He watches her as she treats the body lovingly. He winces at the word "body," or perhaps he winces at the fact that she's more loving than he has been of late.

He looks again and sees his wife. For the first time in several years, he doesn't see the face that silently accuses him. He knows his many sins. He allowed himself to be arrested, he wasn't strong enough through what happened next, and he didn't prevent that last spell. He couldn't stop the painful, lingering illness cast upon her by a furious sister because of such a small lie. He stopped being a man in his wife's eyes so long ago.

He looks one more time and sees the kind face as she finishes the rituals. With the golden hair and blue eyes, she could be his wife all over again. Yet his wife never had that warmth in her face, nor the soft curves, except for eight and a half blessed months. His blood quickens at that train of thought, and then he blushes. This is neither the time nor the place to entertain such thoughts.

She leaves him alone with his wife, but turns back for a moment at the door. He looks at her again and is pulled into her eyes. Along with the kindness is a promise. There will be life—and love—again. Is it a promise she offers personally, or one she offers on behalf of all nature?

Either way, he will accept.

A/N: Inspired by a song linked in the 20 August Saturday Night Drabbles thread by Karelia. (<http://youtu.be/wJiCFJO0FkY>)

Beta read by Kyria of Delphi