

The Sounds That Fill

by lady_rhian

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Chapter 1 of 1

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She hears them in unlikely places, the sounds that fill a marriage. The sounds that filled *her* marriage.

She still uses the alarm clock he left behind. The distinctively high *coo* of white owls makes her heart beat faster; she looks around to see if it's Harry's owl finding her in the middle of Diagon Alley. And she has the hardest time at cafes. Any random person, man or woman, elder or youth, who orders the tea he fancied startles her, even though it's a common kind of tea, not at all particular to him.

She's attuned to the sorts of things she never noticed before, and they unsettle her, like a rock dropped into an eerily still pond.

It's like her mind forgot that *she* left *him*, rather than the other way around.

Family, family, family. Marriage? Why focus on that? Marriage and family are the same, aren't they? That's what she thinks he thinks, at least.

And then there are the sounds she doesn't hear, the emptiness that can fill a room. No one snores in the bedroom. The telly is always off. And the coffeemaker doesn't drip in the morning. Well, it does now. She's taken to running water through it and setting the timer so that she still wakes up to the sound of coffee, if not the smell.

No one asks where the keys are.

No one asks who's cooking dinner.

No one says You're beautiful.

No one says I love you.

It's not that she longs for it, the ephemeral sound of Something, the voice of a faceless Someone. She *misses* it, the accumulation of sounds that came from one man, his words and snores and moans. It's the empty that is made; a residue of dust left after a large piece of furniture has been moved.

A/N: Thanks to my betas, the mods, and the readers and participants who have made this competition pure joy.

Prompt: Disturbing sounds appear to emanate from an unlikely source.