

Regrets

by Pearle

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Summary: “I can’t tell you how sorry I am. If only things were different.” Regrets, everyone has them.

Disclaimer: The characters, settings, etc., of the Harry Potter series are not mine; they belong to J.K. Rowling and Co. I promise to return them when I am through. Well, most of them anyway.

[illegible]

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"You're sure no one saw you?"

"No one saw me. I came in through the side entrance just like you told me. What do you think would happen if someone *did* see me?" Opening the clasp at her throat, Hermione took her cloak off and draped it over a nearby chair before coming to stand in front of Severus, her gaze piercing as she watched him.

"Really, the bat of the dungeons entertaining a witch half his age, a former student, and Minerva's apprentice to boot—I can only imagine what else they would call me. Or what they might do to me." Severus shook his head as he contemplated the thought. Selecting a bottle from his sideboard, he poured Hermione a glass of wine.

"I've never called you a bat." With a nod she accepted the glass. Sipping her wine, she watched the dour wizard in front of her.

"Perhaps not, but I believe those dunderheads you insist on calling friends did, as well as quite a few others who, for now, shall remain nameless."

“And you would rather no one knows I’m here?”

"I do have a reputation to up hold." Tentatively, Severus reached for the witch.

Hermione sighed, setting her glass to the side she stepped into his embrace. "I suppose it is for the best. I have to say, getting to know you these last few weeks has been quite a revelation."

Severus kissed the side of her jaw before nipping along the smooth column of her neck, soothing the bite with a gentle kiss before moving on to the next bit of skin. "A revelation for both of us, I assure you."

Hermione savored the sensation. "I can't tell you how sorry I am. If only things were different. Really, I almost wish I didn't have to do this, but a promise is a promise."

The feel of her fangs piercing his neck was the last thing Severus registered before falling into oblivion.

Finishing the last of her wine, Hermione regarded Severus as he lay in a bloodless heap on the floor. She'd actually started to like the man. If only he hadn't been such a bastard throughout her schooling, or even more importantly, if he hadn't continued to be a bastard to this day, and a smug one at that. She supposed the final straw was sneaking around to see him. The first few times had been exciting, but when she'd expressed a desire to go out to dinner, to take a walk through Hogsmeade, he had flatly refused, saying he didn't want anyone to know they were seeing one another. He assured her it wasn't her; he had a persona to protect.

She suspected it was a routine he had pulled on several witches since the war ended, especially since his standing as a war hero seemed to attract quite a few willing women, if the rumors were true. A quiet laugh escaped as she contemplated the real reason he had them come secretly to his chambers: he was a bastard and a cheap one, too. It wasn't his reputation that had been at stake, it was his wallet; it was cheaper, and easier, to have his intended 'victim' meet him in his quarters until he tired of them. Then he could send them on their way; one patent glare from Severus and the witch would be gone in a flash.

Any accusations or disparagements against his character were met with complete and absolute disbelief. No one ever saw Severus and the accusing witch together!*"It must be delusions,"* they would say, shaking their heads sadly; after all, secret meetings in his quarters? Really, the witch couldn't come up with anything better?

Running her tongue over her fangs Hermione thought it was just as well no one knew she'd been there. Less explaining to do. Though she probably had been negligent in not mentioning the vampire she'd run into one night in the Forbidden Forest while gathering herbs for a potion she'd been interested in. Well, it was too late for that now, and she **had** promised herself long ago to get even with the man after all he had put her and her friends through. A promise was a promise.

Besides, it was like her mother always said, 'No one can take advantage of you unless you let them.' Grabbing her cloak, Hermione let herself out through the side entrance. *'No sense in running into anyone at this late date,* she thought as she stepped out into the quiet night, a firelark sitting silently on a tree outside the hidden entrance was the only witness to her departure.

A/N: Not even sure where this 'Ficlet from nowhere' came from. I suppose I should blame it on a few discussions about dating and men with my daughter and my comment to her (that I would like her to take to heart), 'No one can take advantage of you unless you let them.' Which sort of warped into the scene above in my mind, but Hermione as a vampire?

Oh, the fangs clicking into place are a reference to True Blood, which has also been on my mind since the new season starts soon.

A grateful thank-you to Shug for her support, her time, her general enthusiasm for Dances and all my work and for beta-ing this story for me, especially when I know you have a life outside of the internet that keeps you more than busy. I truly appreciate your help and your friendship.

Note: There seems to be quite a few questions as to why I included friendship as a category for the story. My feeling is this, they became friends before moving on to something more romantic, but in an effort to avoid misrepresenting the story, I have decided to remove the category from the listing. Hope this clears things up for those who have questioned it.

Ahem, back to writing other things.

Pearle

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