

Never Again

by Savva

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One

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She opens the door and steps inside. The first thing her eyes grasp is a pair of his shoes. She draws a ragged breath and shifts her gaze. It doesn't help, because she immediately notices his coat on a hanger. She reaches for it without thinking and brings its sleeve to her face, breathing in the familiar spicy scent. *His scent*.

"No." She shakes her head. "No, no, no..." Choking on her sobs, she stumbles in to their living room.

Her living room now...

His eyeglasses gleam in the ray of setting sun, as if asking about their master.

She walks closer and traces his notes with a tip of her finger. *There will be no more notes*, she thinks.

As she walks around the flat, she can feel the tears running down her cheeks. Everywhere she looks, she sees signs of his presence: his woollen cardigan on an armchair, his favourite mug in a sink, his toothbrush in a cup.

Everything reminds her of him: his scent that still lingers in their bedroom, his voice that still sounds in her ears.

Hermione sinks on the sofa and, unable to hold it together any longer, weeps. He is gone. Her husband of fifty years is no more. No more sarcastic remarks, witty banters, low chuckles. Never again will she feel his caress. Never again will she come apart in his arms. Never again will she wake up to the sound of his quill scribbling on the parchment.

Never. Again.

Perhaps tomorrow, she'll think how much they achieved together. Maybe, she will even be able to smile while looking into the black eyes of their daughter.

Not today though, because today she feels too empty, too forlorn. Today her heart bleeds, as grief sinks its teeth into it deeper and deeper, and only one thought pulses in her temples,

Never again.