

In Spite of Everything

by SS Lupin

A post-war ficlet about Harry's habits.

One-shot.

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: Not mine.

There were some habits Harry couldn't break.

He still wore glasses with round black frames, even when St. Mungo's offered to spell him with normal vision, and in pictures something would give a light of reflection in his lenses. He didn't mind. That way, no one could see his eyes.

Much to Malfoy's dismay, he still had a penchant for oversized robes, if he bothered to put them on. Many times, Harry would wear old Muggle clothes to work, baggy sweatpants and torn jeans and faded shirts. And his hair was still a mess – once, in an awkward interview that almost turned violent for *Witch's Weekly*, he answered to a question about his fringe, "I brush it. Isn't that enough?"

He kept one fact about himself to himself – the thousands of readers didn't need to know that he would still have nightmares long after Voldemort's defeat. They left a ghostly pain in his scar as he would thrash violently in bed, but Malfoy would always be there to wake him up with harsh shaking followed by gentle touches.

Harry still called Malfoy by his last name. There was no animosity or hatred between them, those strong feelings replaced by something else entirely. But Malfoy was Malfoy in Harry's mind and heart. Besides, he didn't like dragons much anyway.

After Harry fucked Malfoy, he almost always cried, hacking up dry sobs as Malfoy rubbed circles on his back. He couldn't touch anyone without hurting them, he would mumble, collapsing on the mattress, spent and sweaty. He'd push at Malfoy, telling him to go before *they* would get him, and he'd be alone. Broken, useless, the un-Hero, the pawn. But when Malfoy cleaned them up instead and pulled Harry close to him, he was just Harry.

He had picked up another habit in recent days, one to move past the messy, compulsive, unfinished burden he had carried for years.

"Malfoy, I love you." A drowsy whisper made in the minutes before dawn.

"Shh, Potter. Go back to sleep."

Harry closed his eyes, at peace. They could break their habits, after all.

- end.