

Some Have to Live With the Scars

by JackieJLH

War can scar both mind and body, forever changing who we are.

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Chapter 1 of 1

War can scar both mind and body, forever changing who we are.

Some of us fall by the wayside,

And some of us soar to the stars,

And some of us sail through our troubles,

And some have to live with the scars.

*

I tried to scrub it off my head once, when I was too young to know that was impossible. I was five and so sick of being teased at school. Aunt Petunia found me in front of the bathroom mirror, rubbing a rag against my forehead so hard that I had started to bleed, staining the white cloth in my hand with spots of red. After she shrieked for ten full minutes, during which Uncle Vernon threw things and threatened me with all sorts of punishment if I ever did anything like that again, they decided that I was a bit too odd, and maybe too dangerous, to be around their son any more than strictly necessary. I was moved to the cupboard under the stairs that very night. Maybe if I'd never done that, they wouldn't have hated me quite as much as they did. I guess I'll never know.

*

I know I have no reason to be ashamed, but I'm the only woman I can see whose dress robes cover every inch of skin on her neck and chest, and it bothers me. I feel like I'm wearing a sign—I've got something to hide, everyone, look! Ron tells me I'm silly, that I look beautiful in anything, and that I'm hardly the only person who bears marks of the war. He bought me robes with a low-cut neckline to wear to Neville and Luna's wedding, hoping to change my mind, but took them back to the Madam Malkin's when I could only cry at the sight of them. I know he's right, and I'm usually the *last* person to worry about my looks. It's just... it makes me feel so ugly. Dolohov is lucky that he was identified among the dead at the end of the last battle, victim of a Killing Curse at Snape's hand. He would have suffered a far more painful death if he'd found himself at the end of *my* wand.

*

My fiancée thinks I'm handsome, even though I feel like I see Mad-Eye Moody when I look in the mirror these days. She always was a bit different from everyone else, though, so maybe she sees something there that I don't. Whatever her reasons, at least I'm sure of her sincerity; Luna doesn't lie about anything. And Gran... well, Gran

seems prouder of me now than she ever did before I looked this way, so maybe it isn't such a bad thing after all. I could be far worse off. I could have ended up like Professor Snape—a marred face and no one to say that it doesn't matter.

*

Greyback left his mark on me as a child, and I've done enough damage to my skin over the years, whenever the Wolfsbane potion wasn't available and the wolf turned on itself. The war took its toll on my body as well, and now it's impossible for anyone to look at me without seeing evidence of some past injury. Sirius used to tell me that they made me look sexy; Nymphadora doesn't seem to feel the same. She worries about me and pities me because of them, and while I know she means well, I'm not sure how much longer I can take it. I can't seem to make her understand that the only time I feel ugly and disfigured is when she reminds me that I should.

*

It's silly, how much attention my husband pays to the little mark on my thigh. The last remnants of a Slicing Hex that grazed me during the second battle in Diagon Alley, it bled for over an hour while I fought. It wasn't until things calmed down that my brothers surrounded me and, in true Weasley form, tried to bully me into going to St. Mungo's. I refused, not wanting to waste the time of the already overworked Healers, and so finally Fred reluctantly patched up my leg as best he could. Really, it was nothing then and is nothing now, just a small semi-circle of skin that's even paler than the rest, but Harry finds it amusing that I'm ticklish just *there*, and loves to torture me by kissing and licking it before putting his mouth... to much better use.

*

The Dark Mark is nothing more than shiny, raised skin now; Mother blasted it off my arm with a spell not too long after I went into hiding. At the time I'd hated her for it. My master's mark was something I treasured, and I feared that I would never be able to redeem myself in his eyes without it. But it had to be done, and in the end the Dark Lord was defeated, so I suppose it's safer this way. The Aurors are still looking for me, I'm sure. I can't know for certain—with my mother dead and the traitor, Snape, hiding from his newfound heroism and refusing to leave Hogwarts unless *absolutely* necessary, I can only assume that I'm still a wanted man. Muggle life is just as horrible and dirty as I'd always imagined it would be, and I want to go home, but... I'm a Malfoy. It will take more than the loss of the use of my wand to break me. And I'll be fine as long as I keep a careful eye out for anyone who may be paying too much attention to my left arm.

*

They're like a spider web wrapped around my arms and chest, thin cords of raised flesh. They're the first thing I see every day when I get out of bed and catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror. I'd asked Hermione to see if she could find a way to help me get rid of them, after realising that the cream Madam Pomfrey had given me was barely doing anything at all to diminish their appearance, but she'd said there wasn't any spell that would remove them completely or even fade them all that much. For all that magic can do, it can't fix everything, I guess. These days, I try not to make too much mention of them anyway—it took me long enough to convince Hermione that I really *do* think she's gorgeous despite the evidence she wears of Dolohov's hex, and I can only imagine what sort of things her mind would come up with if she knew that I hate the way I look, too.

*

A fitting thing. A symbol of all the pains I've endured over the years. That's what I've decided to see it as. People turn their faces away to avoid accidentally staring, and children openly gape at my disfigured skin, but I pay neither reaction any mind. To be honest, I barely notice it anymore. And sometimes it's satisfying to have veritable proof of the danger I was in all those years. Besides, even my most intimidating glare barely makes the students flinch these days, now that they're certain I'm not *really* a psychotic Death Eater bent on killing half of their classmates, and this, thankfully, gives them one more reason to avoid eye contact with me. Children fear ugly things, and the startled look they get on their faces when I catch them staring amuses me.

*

Four little stars are what they look like; four little *pink* stars, an utterly horrid colour, in an asymmetrical pattern on my chest. It's ridiculous. I fought in two wars, and the only lasting marks I have are from four Ministry idiots who attacked me all at once and without warning, the bloody cowards. Many people have expressed to me their outrage at that whole affair, and they always ask if I was seriously hurt. I just tell them that my injuries were nothing a trip to St. Mungo's couldn't fix. It's no one's business what I have underneath my robes, after all. And it's no matter. Realistically, I'm an old spinster, and I haven't been what anyone would consider *beautiful* in many years. I am the former Head of Gryffindor, current Hogwarts Headmistress, and the well respected leader of the Order of the Phoenix. *Those* are the things that are important to me. These little *stars* change nothing.

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And some of us sail through our troubles,

And some have to live with the scars.

The quotes at the beginning and end of the story are from "*The Circle of Life*" by Tim Rice (the original version, not the Disney one *g*).

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