

Crying

by stickleyhunter

Severus sees Hermione for the first time in years. He realizes he may not be over her after all. One-Shot

Chapter 1

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I am not J.K. Rowling. I do not own any of the characters or locations mentioned here. I am not making any money off of this story.

I haven't seen her in years. At first I wasn't sure if it was her, but there she is. Across the room. Mingling with the other guests. As beautiful as ever. No. Even more beautiful. I know it is her. Even if my eyes didn't recognize her at first glance, my heart did. My heart knew immediately. Yes. My eyes may have stopped, but my heart is still crying.

An inappropriate relationship. A student. A teacher. Forbidden. Her final year at school. I don't remember how it started. It matters not. She was everything to me. No. She is everything to me. Tender. Loving. Accepting. The candle that lights my blackened soul. I never asked her to leave. I never wanted her to leave. But I could not ask her to stay, and she did not volunteer. I can still remember the day that she left me. Alone and crying.

From what I can recall, I spent that summer in a bottle. In through my mouth. Out through my eyes. Lonesome. Maudlin. Pathetic. I could not say that I had lost her, because I had never really had her. I only wish that thought had brought me some comfort. It did not. But time heals all wounds, right? And after a fashion I was once again able to go through the motions of life. Teaching. Terrorizing. Finding simple pleasure in brewing. Researching. Not feeling. It was so easy to pretend I was over her. I am a masterful actor. And even though I forced my ducts to remain dry, the tears had to go somewhere. And they did. Filling me from within. Drowning me. For the first time in my life I was free to do whatever I wanted. And the only thing I could do was keep crying.

She is approaching me. Whether by accident or by design I do not know. I am mesmerized by the slight sway of her hips. Her gentle smile. I can remember the feel of her soft skin beneath my fingertips. Silky. Her creamy complexion soothing my tired eyes. She is without blemish. I long for more than a memory. Her eyes catch mine and I am unable to look away. Transfixed. I can't move. I can't breathe. Is my heart still beating? I shouldn't have come. Someone help me. A simple hello. Tentative. Weary. She wants to know how I have been. Can't she tell? I've been crying.

She takes my fist in hers. It is like heaven and hell. Addictive. The feel of her fingers laced in mine. Unbearable. Knowing that I will never hold her again. If it's possible, I love her even more than I did before. Why doesn't she love me? Won't she see? I don't want to forever be crying.

Our conversation is uncomfortable. Formal. Small talk. She seems nervous. Frightened. The only person I do not want to intimidate, and yet it is obviously the only emotion she feels for me. Please read my mind. Hear the words I cannot say. A gentle squeeze of her palm and I know the end is near. The beginning of the end. Or is it the continuation? She wishes me well. She turns to leave and I watch her walk away. Don't go! If only my lips could form the words. It is too late. She's gone now. I guess I'll always be crying.

I no longer wish to be here. Did I ever want to be here? I make my way back to my quarters. Slowly. There is no one to hurry home to. I think I have a bottle I can crawl in.

Perhaps I can drink away her memory. Even if it's just for one night. Then I see her. For the second time in years. The second time that night. In front of my door. Waiting for me. An angel. Salvation. It is my turn to be frightened. No words are spoken, but I hear what she cannot say. She takes my hands. Heaven and hell. She presses her lips to mine. A rush of emotions fill me. In that moment, I am simultaneously lost and found. This time I will have her. This time I will not lose her. So many years have passed since that night, and she is still here. But I don't think she'll ever understand why the simple touch of her hand can start me crying.

PLEASE, PLEASE review my story, I love reviews so!

A/N : The story was originally meant to end just before the last paragraph. However, at the last minute I decided to try my hand at a happier ending. If you prefer the angst, feel free to pretend that the last paragraph didn't happen. The story was inspired by Roy Orbison's song, "Cryin."