

The Last Homecoming

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Going home stopped feeling good years ago. Maybe it was when Petunia started regarding her no less warmly than an annual infestation of locusts or when her parents began to treat her as a curious and strange guest come to call. But Lily had stopped seeking comfort and regeneration from the place she had called home for so many years. Her home was now in the wizarding world, amongst her own kind, her friends, and, of course, James.

But she had promised that before she married at the end of the summer she would spend her last days as a single woman with her family. She had hoped to recapture some of the innocence and joy of her childhood, but the truth was that they had all changed too much. Petunia was now married and had moved on with her life. Her very rigid and gruff Muggle husband dictated that she have no contact with her sister any more. Happily, she seemed to comply; therefore, Lily had not even heard from her sister, much less seen her since arriving home. The subject of Petunia attending the wedding hadn't been broached by any of them; it was understood she wouldn't be there.

Lily tried to connect with her parents. They assured her that their opinion of James was a high one and they had great hopes for their happiness. But any further discussion about her life, her studies, and her career were met with confused looks perched over forced, simpering smiles. Try as they might, they just couldn't understand the world she came from. And ailing health for them both exacerbated their limited capacity to comprehend a life outside of simple daily survival.

It would only be a few more days, she told herself as she drank a cup of tea and stared out the window at the drizzling rain. She wondered what James was doing and if there had been more gatherings of the Order of the Phoenix. She wondered if her roommate had remembered to feed the cat and if work was piling up for her. She felt useless and in the way in the small cottage, no longer familiar with her parents' routine and customs.

"Did you hear that Eileen Snape finally passed, poor thing." Her mother's nonchalant voice broke into her thoughts.

"What?"

"The Snapes," she rambled on, reheating her tea and busying herself about the small kitchen. "Weren't you friends with the boy? He went to Hogwarts. I thought you were close. She died last week. Though, she was on death's door for years now. That no-good husband of hers saw to that. Good riddance to bad rubbish as far as he's concerned. But I think their son is home settling the estate. Don't know what he's been up to, but I think he's done well. Haven't you kept in touch?"

The topic stunned Lily, and at first she found no voice to answer, her mind too busy processing the names and images from the past. Vividly, she saw a young, dirty, bruised boy telling her fascinating stories about magic and a faraway school that they would soon go away to together. Equally clear was an awkward, thin teenager who held her hand secretly and pouted every time she outscored him in Potions. But the most vibrant image was an angry, mortified young man glaring at her and spitting the word "Mudblood" in front of half the school. His later apology had not taken away the knowledge that he would always consider her impure.

"No, I didn't!" she shouted, as she too stood from her chair. "I didn't come here for that. I came here because I haven't talked to you in three years. And I thought it was time I did."

"It's long past that time now." Bitterness still prevailed in his words.

"And what was there to say before?" she asked, crossing her arms. "That I'm sorry I was so unreasonably offended at being called a Mudblood and beg you to forgive me for requesting to be treated with a bit of dignity?"

He spun to face her. "I tried to apologize! Or do you not remember just turning your back on me?"

"Oh, I remember it all right because it broke my heart. You chose the dark arts over me." She hadn't realized that the words were true until she had spoken them. Suddenly she remembered the cold sadness that permeated her heart when she had stepped back through the Gryffindor portrait hole and left him standing alone in the hall, for it was the last she ever really said to him.

Severus seemed to find sick humor with her sentiment because it caused him to sneer and chuckle darkly. "You have no idea what a broken heart feels like."

"How can you be so snide?" she gasped. "How can you assume that you know anything of my feelings? Are you so self-absorbed and miserable that you can't look beyond that great beak of yours to see that other people besides you suffer?"

With one giant sweep of his arm, Severus sent a stack of boxes tumbling to the floor, spilling a further assortment of disjointed items onto the floor. He charged to within an inch of her face and glared with deathly dark eyes and lips quivering with rage.

"It broke me when you turned away," he shouted. "It. BROKE. Me! There was no one I loved more than you. But I had nothing and I was nothing. I was desperate for some way to prove myself worthy of you. If you had only given me time, if only you had believed in me--"

"Believed in you?" she returned, gathering her wits after his passionate charge. "I was the only one who ever did believe in you, and I never needed to see a Dark Mark on your arm. You did all of that for you. For your own greed and pathetic need to be accepted. Don't try to blame me for your mistake!"

Her eyes were starting to sting from tightly restrained tears threatening to break through, and she didn't wish for him to see her still so upset by something she thought was long past. Making her own way free of the clutter and trash, Lily attempted to leave but strong fingers grabbed her arm in a painful grip.

"So you're just going to run out on me again?" He spun her around to face him, his nails digging into her arms. "What did you come here for, Lily. Really, what was it? Absolution?" Severus gave a very slight twitch of his eyebrow as he stared deeply into her eyes from. "Curiosity? Or maybe to make sure you aren't making the wrong choice?"

Lily tried for a sharp comeback but found no air in her lungs for speech. Nothing but a pitiful gurgle escaped her. His eyes held her in place, and she felt herself dragged down into their depths, unable to pull herself free.

"Did you come here looking for something the magnificent James Potter isn't able to give you?" Severus asked with menacing quiet.

She had enough mobility to delivery a resounding slap to his face that she had hoped would break his hold on her. But even in his shock from the blow, he held tight and instead of getting away, Lily found herself suddenly smothered in a heavy, fierce kiss.

At first she fought, pulled, and punched at Severus. No matter which way she moved her head, he was there, suffocating her with his wet, lascivious mouth. Just as she was about to panic and lose all sense of sanity, she forced herself to relax and not fight. If she could lull him into thinking she was complying, she could perhaps break free.

Instead, a strange thing happened. She remembered the few hesitant, timid kisses they had shared as budding teens at school together. There had been a few fumbled gropings and cautious exploration. That was her memory of Severus's affections. But this man before her was unfamiliar and foreign in comparison. His powerful kiss was startling and curiously arousing.

Lily found herself forgetting to fight her way free of his arms and allowed her body to conform to his, her lips became pliant, her tongue returned each stroke he delivered.

It was so unlike anything she had experienced with James. He was always a kind and gentle lover, which she had always appreciated. However, this new technique intrigued her, and she began to wonder exactly where Severus had learned such erotic aggression. A bubble of jealousy began to rise from her stomach as she found herself immediately disliking anyone who had spent time luxuriating with her childhood love and teaching him things that could have been theirs to discover together.

Lily suddenly couldn't keep her hands from him. She clutched at Severus's body and face, pulling him closer and kissing him deeper, claiming him for her own at that moment. They stumbled and teetered over heaps of overturned boxes and piles of trash that fenced them into the small living room. Their breaths came raggedly as Severus buried his mouth against her neck, pulling her shirt free of her skirt and running his hands over her bare back.

They mauled each other like starved animals feasting on an exquisite meal. Lily's head swam from the intense feelings and emotions that coursed through her. Something kept telling her to stop, but it was such a weak and pathetic voice she easily ignored it and went on to tear at the buttons on Severus's shirt.

Suddenly there was a funny feeling in her stomach, a pulling, and her whole body felt compressed against his. Her feet found new flooring under them, and she tumbled forward onto Severus. Under him was a mattress that caught their fall. He had Apparated them to the second floor. She was about to chastise him for his impertinence in assuming she would willing go to his bedroom when he rolled on top of her, pinning her to the bed. The feel of his body on top of her was hard and angular.

Still, no words of protest came from her because his lips made her forget any objection she was prepared to declare. Something in her wanted him. She wanted this taboo, illicit moment with a man she hadn't dared love or even think about in three years. It was an act that would forever damage her relationships if it were ever revealed. Lily was allowing a known Death Eater to make love to her. Who knew how many he had tortured, maimed, or killed? But his touch right then was about nothing but passion and desire. It was gentle and demanding, arousing and frightening. It was something she couldn't even begin to consider how to reject.

Lily pulled at his clothing, revealing his flesh to her touch. He was warm, smooth, and hard. His skin was pale, and she could easily trace the outline of nearly every bone in his body. Severus's own hands worked quickly to remove her clothing and experience every inch of her. His lips and fingers seemed to find places that no one had ever ventured, causing her to moan softly through a firmly bitten bottom lip.

When he pushed himself inside her eager, aching body, he looked deeply into her eyes, and she had no choice but to look back. He whispered silent words that she understood, though she couldn't hear. He loved her, had always loved her, had wanted only her, would have died for her. His intensity was overwhelming. An avalanche of emotions and sensations threatened to smother her. Lily began to cry. Somewhere behind the gasps and cries of desire, tears spilled from her eyes. Her release was a mix of delirious tremors of ecstasy and shaking sobs of sorrow.

Severus came with a great shudder and deep groan. Then he lay still on top of her, his face against her neck, very quietly murmuring her name. When he saw that her face was wet with tears, he kissed them away and held her very close. Her tears led her to an exhausted slumber, and she later woke to find the room dark and Severus lying next to her, his arm draped over her protectively as he slept.

Suddenly it was clear to her what she had done. The reality of her actions fell around her like a ton of bricks. Lily groaned slightly and sat up. It was enough to awaken her bed companion.

He sat up too. "It's all right, you can rest a while," he said softly to her, trying to pull her back down next to him.

"No. No, I have to go," she said in a flustered voice and began to crawl out of bed.

Severus turned from the horrific sight and receded further into the trees where he Apparated back to the Dark Lord's lair, leaving his heart behind forever.