

Burden of the Heart

by minuet99

The heart will break, but broken live on.

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Chapter 1 of 1

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"The heart will break, but broken live on." - Lord Byron

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Sometimes it was a twinkle in her eyes. Or the way an eyebrow arched. Or the quirk of her smile. The way she stood, or turned her head or bit the fleshy part of her lip between her teeth.

That's all it would take for his heart to crumble just a little more. Just when he thought he'd hardened his heart against any further pain, another fissure would develop from a singular glance or action. Or perhaps the cadence of her laughter.

All he wanted was for the pain to go away. He didn't want to have the constant reminder, and yet he could not deny her existence. He had lost before and he would not lose again.

Bright brown eyes peeked from behind the wayward curls that fell haphazardly across her face. She grinned widely at him, and he mustered all the energy he could into faking an acceptable response. Luckily for him, an incline of the head and a raised eyebrow sufficed. He was forever grateful that he was a man of few words and gestures, for he did not know if he could have found the energy to maintain the illusion.

Sienna Snape was the very image of her mother, Hermione Granger. She appeared to acquire more of Hermione's physical features with each passing day — and demonstrated the unique habits that were the essence of her mother.

With each appearance, Severus Snape's heart would break just a little more. Soon he would not have any left to hurt — there were those who still maintained he didn't have one. Sometimes he himself had wondered if he had a heart. But when Hermione Granger had reentered his life, captivated him and given him a reason to exist, he found that he did indeed have a one and it was all hers. He surprised everyone, even himself, by declaring himself to be hers forever. When Sienna was born, he found room in his heart for the daughter he never expected to have.

When Hermione died, unexpectedly, in something so *ordinary* as a Muggle car crash, part of him died with her. In that travesty of metal and other moving parts that the Muggles used as transportation. She had been spending some time with some Muggle elementary school friends whom she'd recently got back in touch with. It hadn't been their fault — they had done everything right. The other driver, caring for no one else's life, had been intoxicated and ploughed directly into their vehicle. A clash of

metal, and her life was over.

On their wedding day, he had given himself entirely to her, heart and all. And on the day she died, she took it with her. Her love had entreated him out of his shell of protection. For so long he had successfully masked his true emotions and feelings, and she came along and taught him the true meaning and feeling of love. Once the light of his life was gone, it took all of his energy not to revert to the cold, unfeeling man and hide behind the barriers he had so carefully constructed.

Had Sienna not been in the picture, he might have done exactly that. It pained him greatly to see a daily reminder of the woman he loved, but he would not abandon his daughter the way his father had abandoned him. His father had been physically present for a majority of his childhood, but emotionally was in a different world. His mother had been loving, but not in the way Hermione had bestowed affection on their daughter.

It would be selfish to think of only his heart and his pain. He would raise their daughter in the manner in which he would have wanted to have been raised himself. He would strive to emulate Hermione in his parenting. He would not become his father. He would not.

Even though every day pained him all the more, he cherished the little bit of Hermione he still had with him in this world. It would not be an easy road to travel, but they would travel it together. As a family.

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"The heart that truly loves never forgets." - Proverb

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