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Solitude, My Pain (The Last Thing Left Of Me)

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Inhaltsangabe

It wasn't her first Christmas alone, and she knew that it wouldn't be her last.

Vorwort

Inhaltsverzeichnis

1. Untitled

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Narcissa wasn't afraid of Boggarts any more. It would be foolish of her to still fear them, since they were nothing but images, nothing but shadows while what she saw daily in the war was terrifyingly real. Besides, what would they show her? She'd lost her husband and sister to Azkaban long ago, and her son slipped further away from her with each passing day. He remained at Hogwarts whenever possible, not even returning for Christmas, but how could she blame him? Narcissa knew that Draco felt safe at school amongst his friends, and she wouldn't take that away from him, not in times like these.

Of course, she worried. Worried more than she dared to admit. Of course she was afraid; even the thought of losing those she still had left took her breath away. But too often she dreamed of seeing Lucius' dead body, had witnessed him die too many times in her sleep. She wasn't afraid of Boggarts any more; she had been forced to fight too many real fears in her life.

Narcissa had once been afraid of losing her sisters; now they both were gone, gone and would never return. One had broken free by committing an unspeakable betrayal, putting shame on her family's name, while the other was drowning within her fanaticism, unable to see how much she'd destroyed herself and everything around her.

She had once been afraid of losing her parents; time had forced her to watch her mother slowly fall apart with grief after her husband had died until she, too, left this world as a broken woman. Narcissa would never forget the day she'd found her mother lying there with a strange smile on her face, as though the thought of being reunited with the man she loved had given her new strength during her last breaths.

She had once been afraid of being alone; now solitude was her constant companion. The house was always empty—whenever she awoke, there was nobody beside her. There was nobody to talk to, nobody to entrust herself to, nobody at all. Even when Lucius had still been with her, Narcissa had always held back, not wanting to bother him even more, not wanting to worry him.

Even Azkaban was no longer a place to fear; it had become a part of her life, still giving her a horrific feeling of unease, and yet, unavoidable. It was her only chance to be close to her family.

Bella looked terrible; she was bony thin, pale as a ghost. The years in prison had silenced her; she wouldn't talk, not even to Narcissa. Bella only looked at her, her large black eyes resting on Narcissa, completely expressionless.

Lucius, too, had changed, but he'd still reach out his arms to her despite being aware that they were not permitted to touch one another. He'd still ask about Draco, would still give a deep, quiet sigh when once again they were forced to separate. There was still a glimpse of hopefulness flaring in his eyes.

Azkaban had become a part of her life, and so had fear, so had solitude. It wasn't her first Christmas alone, and she knew that it wouldn't be her last. While others came together to celebrate, to, at least for a day, forget about their worries, she'd only sit beside the window and watch the snow falling from the sky. Sometimes, loneliness seemed to overwhelm her; sometimes she'd cry quiet, tearless sobs.

Narcissa wasn't afraid of Boggarts any more. What could they show her? The war had showed her too much, had taken too much from her already—her life, her happiness and even her tears. The war had changed those she loved; the war had destroyed everything. The only way to escape now was to follow her mother into the grave, but she wouldn't give in. It was not in her nature.

She looked up in surprise when she heard the thud coming from the entrance hall and gave a quiet sigh,

slowly rising. Instinctively, her fingers grasped her wand, causing her to shake her head in disdain when she noticed. Her sudden agitation was ridiculous, she knew; perhaps it was just another Boggart hiding in the wardrobe like they seemed to do so often lately. She would have the elf take care of it in the morning.

Finally, Narcissa reached the hall...

And there he was, lying on the floor, breathing heavily. Blood was billowing from a wound on his stomach, and he was covered in bruises and cuts.

She gasped at the sight, couldn't suppress a scream when she realised what was going on, that he was dying... Her eyes widened with fright as her wand fell to the floor. For a moment she thought...

No. Of course not; of course it wasn't real, couldn't possibly be real. Lucius was in Azkaban, far away from here, far away from her. What she saw was a Boggart, another Boggart... Narcissa wasn't afraid of Boggarts! She wasn't afraid of Boggarts...

And yet, something was different. It felt so real, so terribly real. She wanted nothing more than to turn around and run away, wanted nothing more than to forget what she had seen, but she seemed paralysed, unable to move, unable to even close her eyes. It was a Boggart, a phantasm...

Again she screamed when Lucius reached out his hand, bit her lip until she could taste blood within her mouth. It seemed like a dream, like a terrible nightmare when he finally touched her, when she felt his skin against hers for the first time after so much time had passed. Slowly, Narcissa sank to her knees, felt her tears slowly rolling down her cheeks.

It was real. He was real.

Quickly Narcissa wrapped her arms around his body, held him tightly, whispering faint, desperate healing spells, never wanting to let him go again. He was back... Back... She'd still cling to him long after his quiet moans had fallen silent, her tears would still flow long after he'd closed his eyes.

It was real... It wasn't a dream; it was not like one of her dreams! It was real... He was real...

She'd lost him. Narcissa had lost him merely a minute after they were reunited again; once again her greatest, deepest fear had come true, once again she found her entire world breaking down, burying her beneath the ashes. Once again, nothing but sheer despair remained.

He was gone. Lucius was gone like her mother, gone like her sisters, and nothing would ever bring him back again. She wasn't afraid of Boggarts anymore...