He found Potter sitting on the floor, starring into nothing and just with his pyjama on. Usually Tom felt nothing when he was standing next to Potter. Tom was aware of the fact that he was sensitive towards magic if it was strong enough and Potter had been just like every other student: A blind spot on a big scenery. Hogwarts was warm and felt like home, most of the professors had good enough magic. Merrythought, Dumbledore and Dippet obtained more than average. And now he observed, felt, Potter molding his magic. Wrapping it around his skin and inside the castle.

Notes

Hello and good morning/lunch/afternoon/evening/night; wherever you are. Enjoy what you read, let me know what you think about it if you want and if someone likes to correct my mistakes: Feel free to do so. :-) I tried to make as few as I could but English will never be my first language.

See the end of the work for more notes.

Tom Riddle never thought much about his fellow students. Nor considered he them to be worth a second glance or even a second thought. He had everything he needed: Loyal followers; because they feared him enough not to think about betraying him or they just thought he was right, and a brain which he knew to use instead of others around him. Of course Dumbledore was a nuisance but
he was sure he could handle it in the right way. It was just one single man out of so many others who was suspicious of him. Admittedly one man with a great influence and impact on others, but two could play this game.

Altogether you could say that his life was kind of boring. He learned over the years how to deal with Dumbledore, how to charm the rest of the school or to simple ignore some individuals who didn't have any worth to him. The first few years he made sure to memorize everything about the new world he entered with eleven. He studied, earned the respect of Slytherin house. There was absolutely no challenge and his mind was restless.

Tom's seventh year at Hogwarts started how predicted and went on how he expected it to go on. He got his badge which tagged him as the new head boy during the summer holidays. Of course he saw it coming long before. It was absolutely no surprise for him or someone else. Which didn't mean that he didn't feel a bit proud of himself. Only for a moment because he couldn't afford to show any weakness. Showing proudness meant another being could take advantage of it; in which way couldn't be predicted and if there was one thing Tom hated it was not being the one who was in control of the situation.

In search of an empty section he greeted some students he knew, nodded to the rest and stopped shortly as he opened a door just to find Harry Potter sitting there with an open book in his lap and a distant look in his eyes. Potter was a fellow Slytherin since their first year. Boring, untalented, average. Just with the exception that there was something odd about him since the last year.

"Potter," he greeted shortly and startled the boy. Potter was small, much too small and with a ducked posture; messy hair and he wore way too often patched glasses. Tom had a hard time to stifle a despicable grin because of his absurd appearance.

"Riddle," Potter answered softly, not looking at him. Tom couldn't help but to have the feeling that the boy was mocking him. Before the last year they ignored each other. Potter seemed to think it was better to talk to owls than to learn or make first connections as long as he was still in school with heirs of old and noble houses. Tom knew to take advantage out of it and tied them to his side. But Potter... The thing was that Tom didn't know at least a bit about the boy. It was like he just existed and nothing more. Tom didn't hear anything about friends which Potter could have or hobbies or something similar. He didn't even know a trifle about his upbringing, his heritage or family. It was, Tom frowned, a riddle. Potter acted as if he would live inside a lonely bubble and then something changed suddenly. He still remembered the look of horror in Potter's eyes, disbelieving and mourning. Breath fast and unsteady, his body shaking.

Since this day Potter acted more distant. Absent in classes, outside of their dormitory at night. One time Tom found him standing on the astronomy tower, barefoot and looking at the stars. Tom went to fetch him and bring him back to the Slytherin common room. Neither of them spoke a word and Potter was cold like the night.

They repeated that at least once every second week. Potter grew more and more distant from every time and if he looked at Tom his eyes were full of hate and understanding. Tom didn't understand what was happening but he knew that Potter was wary of him. Sometimes he would catch Potter watching him, watching his every step for a few minutes and then abruptly turn away. It was disturbing and even his dull followers noted that something was in the development to change the dynamics. Something big.

Dippet gave the same speech he did the year before and the year before that. Tom wore a neutral facial expression and everyone applaud him for becoming head boy as Dippet announced him to be one for the following year. Potter didn't clap his hands. Instead he looked strict in Tom's eyes. He
knew he was a brilliant legilimens. But Potter was different. As Tom slipped inside the boy's mind he was greeted with everything and nothing at the same time. It was like a black hole. Fascinating, dark, capturing. A promise for more and a promise for nothing. Tom was the first one to look away and it was hurting to see the little smile which was forming on Potter's face.

Potter was cold, as had someone take away his energy to live. He was the perfect Slytherin. Stony face and no visible emotions. Tom watched him changing. Back in their first year, as both of them were not welcome, he was warm and bubbly and had big eyes. An average young wizard some would say, a normal child with normal behaviour for their age others would say. Nothing special but not the worst at anything. Potter tried a few times to befriend with Tom but gave up after Tom told him what he thought about friends. After that Potter disappeared from his radar. Until they reached their sixth year; there he had his comeback.

Dumbledore watched them, Tom was sure of it. Watching how they danced around each other from the distance and was making his own plans. Potter visited Tom as he was at the hospital wing because of a failed potion. Of course it wasn't Tom's cauldron which exploded. But it hit him and now he had to stay over the night.

Tom dreamed of lips which touched his faintly. A warm breath against his skin and a calming presence. That was were his downfall began.

Tom woke up with a racing heart and a dry mouth. As the Head Boy he had a room for himself, he didn't need to share his sleeping room with snoring people or to watch where he put his things nor who could read his more delightful notes. A fast spell later and he knew that it was still in the middle of the night. That would be the perfect time for students to wander around the castle when they intended to see another student, mostly from the opposite sex to have some fun together. And somehow... Somehow Tom had the urge to think of Potter.

A week later it was happening again. Tom woke up in the dead of night, sticky and his first thought was about Potter. How small he was and how frail he looked, how mysterious and exactly that was Tom's problem. His mind craved for something to solve, something where he didn't need barely ten minutes. He couldn't ignore Potter anymore and he was interesting in a odd way.

It happened in a night where Tom was looking for students who were out of their beds after curfew. It was always a pleasure to catch them, take points from them and send them back to bed. He, Tom, was the one in control, no one else. But this night was different. Of course he found people in the corridors, looked at them with a firm expression and enjoyed watching them crumple up in front of him. He told them to return immediately and went on with his round.

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“It hurts to know, Tom.” Suddenly Potter looked at him; without properly looking. Tears were running down his cheeks and his eyes shone in a hurt way. “The pictures.”
The next day Potter remembered nothing about Tom dragging him back, covering him with a blanket. Potter knew nothing about his tears, his words or his unsteady moving as they went back. 

Or, Tom thought darkly, perhaps Potter pretended to have forgotten everything to avoid his questioning look. If yes then it would be a very Slytherin move...

If Tom would have a conscience it would properly tell him that he acted like a stalker around Potter. Everyone around them noticed that he had changed. Tom Riddle has changed because of a mere person like Harry Potter. He would snort in disbelief but he knew it was the truth and somewhere, deep, very deep, inside him, he could admit it. Tom was never aware of the simplest facts about Potter and within the next three weeks he learned more about Potter that he ever knew.

Potter was not terrible small, he was only younger. Tom was within hearing range as a Ravenclaw girl congratulated Potter afterwards to his 16th birthday. It was an enigma to Tom how Potter happened to be in his year. Still Potter was small and he didn't eat the amount Tom considered healthy. Potter went often outside for a walk or to sit by the lake. It didn't matter whether it was a sunny day or a rainy one. Furthermore Tom never saw him wear anything else then his school uniform. And he seemed to suffer under insomnia which wasn't new information for Tom. A surprise was that Potter had one single friend; still not too close. This Ravenclaw girl. Just like Tom it looked like Potter didn't get any post at breakfast and he needed his coffee before he would say a single word.

Dumbledore was an insane old coward, Tom knew it since he saw Dumbledore at the orphanage for the first time. A fool who assumed he could unite the houses only because of his will.

“Professor,” Tom spoke after Dumbledore nodded in his direction, “I volunteer to work with Potter. I feel confident that I can help him should any problem or question appear.” He smiled his most charming smile and felt sick.

“If you say so, Mr Riddle.” Dumbledore looked troubled and hesitant.

To say that Tom was disappointed was an understatement. Potter proved being the untalented idiot he thought him to be and even though he saw it his mind kept reminding him of the night he watched Potter playing with his magic like it was a tool. Tom wanted to feel it again, the strange and yet familiar magic nudging against his own skin, sending pleasant shivers down his body. He wanted to have this feeling again. Tom's eyes darkened. It was like a rush. Ecstasy and the start of an addiction.

The dream repeated itself almost every night. It was as if he could touch the other person. As would he just have to reach out with his hand and pull whoever near him. The presence was warm, kind. In his dream he wrapped his arms around the being, pulled it as near as he could to feel secure, like being finally at home after a too long time. And every time he woke up he felt a bit more lost.

Playing his game as flawless as ever became more difficult and Tom knew that he had to put his followers back in line. They got too restless, to suspicious that something was off of the normal way. He had to fear that his mask got flaws. Year long hard working got to waste if he didn't take acting again.

And so he tried to ignore the dreams, he ignored the ache which came with it. He became as ruthless as never before. His followers feared him more then ever. He studied the dark arts and planned to
make a third horcrux. He couldn't let his death get between him and his goals.

Weeks passed by. Dumbledore watched him without a break and Tom had to remove a spying spell once. Potter was again just another student. The dreams continued but when he woke up he knew nothing about them because he used occlumency as a separation wall.

It went good until he snapped one night. It felt like being whole again, complete when he was in company of the dark shadow in his dreams. The warm feeling, melting the sorrow in his bones and clearing his mind. It was whispering to him to see the whole picture and Tom wondered what he didn't noticed. Then he would wake up with a moan, a hand on his chest, clamping. His heart was still racing and suddenly he knew that something was very wrong.

He didn't run but his step was goal-driven. Tom barely noted the wind as he opened the door which led to the tower where he had Astronomy another night every week. Potter was there, he stood still, moved not a step. It was like somebody froze the moment and he, Tom, was just someone watching the scene.

“Harry,” Tom said, for the first time ever using the boy's first name. Time stood still just for them as he watched the wind playing with Potter's hair, noting the too thin material of his clothes for the temperatures and frowned. The sky was without clouds and the moon was small; a starry night. “Look at me Harry.” And he turned around.

“You know Riddle,” Potter told him with a small smile that made Tom wanting to struggle Potter until he wasn't breathing anymore. So that he couldn't cause anymore trouble or just irritate Tom with his pure presence. “You'll be the cause of so much mourning. Death'll follow your every step, wherever you try to hide. I could, I should, stop you. Kill you. But then I wouldn't be better than you. And let me tell you. Bad things happen with wizards who are playing with time.” There was a crazy little smile on Potter's face. “You are my future, Tom Riddle. My past and the present. I loathe you for it and I understand you in some weird way. But I can't forgive.” They stood still and neither of them spoke a single word for an eternity. Tom wrapped his arms around Potter's torso, absorbed his shaking with his own body and then he felt tears leaving small wet spots on his shirt.

Despite everything Tom felt warm. Like he did in his dreams. He felt warm, secure, complete, like being finally at home. He would never admit it but he was sure that he smiled. Lips touched each other for a short moment and then they stilled.

“Time'll show us our future,” he said, not letting Potter get away. He knew that he needed to be in the embrace and somehow Tom needed it as well. Questions were still unanswered, the future was probably horrifying but this moment was perfect. And that was everything that mattered for him at the moment.
And? I hope you enjoyed reading it.

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