Watching Her Watching Him

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Summary

Someone watches Harry and Tonks.

Notes

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I watch her watching him.

She thinks she's just doing her duty as an Auror and as a member of the Order assigned to take care of him, but I know better. I see how she looks at him.

I see her eyes as he walks up the stairs, following him, watching each step that he takes. Yes, he has a nice arse; I've noticed it, too. I see how she literally restrains herself from leaping up to follow him to the upper floors, wanting to trail behind him just on the off-chance she can touch, can graze the jeans-clad swells. She's done it before. I've seen it. She walked right up behind him and slapped him lightly, just like a Quidditch mate might do after he'd caught the Snitch. He jumped in surprise at the contact, but then, he smiled, and blushed deep red when he realized it was she who had touched him there. "No girl's ever done that to me," he said softly into her ear as she stood shoulder to shoulder beside him, grinning as he looked down, half in embarrassment, half in amazement. "Yeah, well, they ought to do it more often," she said lightly, looking over at me to see if I was listening in. "It's a nice arse to slap," she laughed. So did he, then. But he turned away and I saw the laughter die in her eyes, replaced by appreciation, then something even more... primal, more basic.
I've seen the hunger in her eyes, the yearning, as he walks by, his head slightly bowed as it always is. I see her holding herself back from running her fingers through the always-mussed hair, wanting to smooth the locks and cow-licks. I did that to him once at breakfast, as he dragged himself down to the kitchen. He had had a hard night; Voldemort was feeling particularly vengeful and he fed it back into Harry in a series of bloody, violent images. The purple circles were deep under his blood-shot eyes. He looked even more mournful than usual. I flung my arm around him in a half-hug, which he leaned into just the slightest bit. "Oh, Harry," I murmured to him, and he allowed me to draw him just the tiniest bit closer. "Yeah," he said, "Voldie wasn't a nice guy. But I was able block him out every time." Triumph lit his emerald eyes. "That's great, Harry," I enthused quietly. We broke apart then, his mood considerably more easy despite the lack of sleep. He turned and took the platter of eggs from in front of him and piled his plate high. I looked at her. She had been staring at us, I knew she was. In the split second that she cut her eyes away, I knew they held jealousy. A wish that that had been her and not me sitting beside him. Maybe something even more...violent. But she covered it well. She said, "So, Harry. What was our favorite evil bloke up to?" "Oh you know, same old stuff," he said back, his mouth full of biscuit. All other attempts to draw information about the nocturnal activities were met with shrugs and half-hearted "you know". She couldn't get any further than that.

I grinned into my tea. I've seen her trying to get close to him, sitting next to him at every meal, every opportunity after that. Well, every meal that she attended. She still had her Auror duties to complete. She knew she couldn't be around him all the time, not like the rest of us. We spread our research and books and parchments and homework out on the big table Remus set up for us in the parlor. Once, when Harry and I were standing and looking in a big musty spell book, searching for any clue about Lily Potter's blood protection, she walked in and stood in the doorway, watching us. She didn't think I had spotted her yet, but I had. Harry hadn't. He was getting punchy from the long hours reading cramped handwriting and moldy texts. He bumped me with his hips as we stood side by side, hunched over the large book. Remus was reading from the other side of the table, his finger passing over the words as Harry read them quietly aloud to us. Something he read was odd, funny. He laughed; I laughed. That's when he bumped into my hip. I bumped back. We laughed again. Even Remus smiled up at us, amused at the teenaged perception of an ancient text, which in reality, wasn't funny at all. Harry repeated the entertaining phrase again, this time in a silly voice, the drawing voice of Snape, then the misty voice of Trelawny. We looked at each other and snickered. He put his hand on my shoulder as we screwed up our eyes and shook in our mutual amusement. But she didn't laugh, didn't join in. She looked up at her and caught for the briefest of moments, that look again. The look that said, "How dare you!" How dare I what, Tonks? Touch Harry? Touch my friend, Harry? Something I've done countless, a million, times? As if possessed, I reach out and take him round the waist, twirling us both around, shrieking now. I start kicking and he joins in, an impromptu can-can. Remus is laughing; everyone in the room is laughing at us and with us. But she isn't. Not really. Oh, she's laughing, but it isn't in her. I can see the cold in her eyes. Harry and I part, breathless with the mirth, the sparkle that has been so absent from our lives these days. We clutch our chests, bending over, touching each other's forearms in mutual support. She watches him, rosy cheeked now, and her eyes soften. She knows he doesn't forget the heaviness of his destiny easily. And she appreciates it. I watch her watching him in that fleeting moment of blessed amnesia of his fate. I watch her watching him as her eyes follow him through the ladder of days, as the hours speed towards another school year, his inevitable encounter with what's to come. It's starting to wear on him. He's not been sleeping well, and not because of Voldemort's nocturnal mayhem. He's controlling the invasive thoughts; no, it's the weight of the world that's on him now. We work like mad through the days and most nights, looking for any clue, any lead towards an antidote to the madness. She's joined us now, having taken some time off from her duties. It's not that I don't understand or appreciate what she's doing for him, for all of us. I do. If only she didn't look at him like that. Harry's begun to notice it as well. The yearning in her eyes, and now, her voice, and her
touch. It seems that she's with us all the time now. There are times I see her reaching under the table to do--what? Rub his knee? His thigh? Maybe even his personal region? I get angry with--jealousy? Jealous that she is touching him in places even I haven't dared to touch him? And I can touch him anywhere, everywhere, except there. Maybe not. Harry hasn't blushed even once when they're together, a sure sign that she hasn't strayed where no one has ever ventured before. I know that's for certain. Because he would have told me. He tells me everything. Especially now. There are no secrets between us, those of us who are so close to him. It's taken him so long, so fucking long, to trust us and to open up to us. Finally. Finally, he's shared parts of his story, his life with us. People have rotated in and out of his life for so long, but we abide. We're here and he's finally accepted that. Still, she's here, too. And it's not that she's not unwelcomed, but he's ours, mine. Not hers.

I watch her watching him. The night of his birthday, his seventeenth, she dressed in, well, not much. She sashayed up to him like a tart. I mean, it wasn't even subtle. He was transfixed. No one, no one, had ever come on to him like that. And Harry, my Harry, started dancing with her. Harry would never dance, and yet he did with her. She was all over him. I caught her looking at me, she looked at me with eyes that said, "He's mine now." Well, he'll never be completely yours. Except...

Except that I watched as she led him away, out of the parlor and up the stairs. She didn't know it, or maybe she did, but I followed them. Followed them up to the third floor where she had a room. I watched as she pulled him close to her outside the door, took his face in her hands, and kissed him. God, the look on his face: shock, bewilderment, awe. Someone was kissing him. I hid in the shadows of the hallway, watching as she ran her hands down his shoulders, his back, his arse, and then around the front to his chest. He didn't move, he barely breathed.

And with a will of their own, my legs moved me out into the hall, walking past them. I looked at her and she looked at me. "Do you mind?" she asked. "I-I-I need to go, Tonks," Harry stuttered, and he backed away from her, a curious combination of fear, mortification, relief, and disappointment on his face. He came towards me and together, we stumbled back down the stairs to the party. "Thanks," he whispered. "Are you really sorry?" I asked. Not wanting to hear his reply, I went off in search of more butterbeer.

After that, I watch her watching him and me. She reserves a certain look for me, a stare that conveys a wisp of a warning, "Just you watch it." I'm not frightened, though I know she and I understand each other now. She still watches him, though the yearning is replaced most often with a kind of sadness, a wistful stare of longing, of an opportunity lost, a wish unfulfilled.

Together, we watch him.