

I'll be good

A Jegulus Story

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Kapitel 14: Part Fourteen

The day was...awful, to say at least. Regulus wasn't able to focus at all, the fact that Mulciber saw him with Potter gave him anxiety. Every second of the day he expected someone to walk up to him and..he didn't exactly know what, but he was scared and it gave him a knot in his stomach. After the lessons he quickly made his way to his dorm and dropped on his bed. The first time since the morning he could breathe clearly and let go off some tension. Maybe it was no big deal and Mulciber was convinced of his annoyed acting at the end of the conversation. Maybe nobody cared at all and he could just go ahead. Talking to whoever he wanted, when he wanted. Over this imagination he started to drift into sleep.

Just a few minutes later he was wide awake again, as the sound of an houseelf appearing in his room cut through the silence. Regulus squinted his eyes and his heart stopped for a beat when he recognised Kreacher. "What are you doing here?", the Slytherin asked in an alarmed tone, unconsciously grabbing the sheets of the bed, while his surroundings seemed to play merry-go-round. He absolutely knew what was coming now. He knew it. Kreacher bowed down shortly and then looked up at him: "Master Black demands to see you, sir. Kreacher was sent to pick Master Regulus up. Master Black is upset about something he heard and wants an explanation." Reggie could barely breathe over these words, but he managed to act quite unimpressed as he got off from his bed: "One minute."

He quickly walked to the bathroom to splash his face with cold water, in an attempt to stay calm and also look less taken through the meatwolf. Quickly combing his hair and straightening his clothes, he tried to ignore the ringing noise in his ears and to tell himself that everything would go well and it maybe wasn't even about what he thought it was. When he came back into his bedroom, Kreacher was standing at the same spot he was when Regulus left, patiently waiting. Silently, they left the castle, with curious eyes looking at them now and then, but no questions. It wasn't unusual for him to be in company of the houseelf. As he entered the grounds, his eyes quickly wandered over to the Quidditch field and he caught himself looking out for James to be precisely. Stupid Potter really was only causing problems, but he couldn't even think that to himself without feeling like an idiot, because in the end it was his own fault by giving him attention in the first place. "Master Regulus..Master Regulus!", the slightly impatient voice of the houseelf finally reached his mindset and given the tone of it, he had been calling out for him more than once. He blinked and looked around, surprised they had passed the door of the Hogwarts grounds without him noticing.

Odd. He couldn't remember walking that long."My apology, I've been a bit in thoughts", he replied to Kreacher and took the portkey in form of a literal key the elf had been reaching out to him.

A few seconds later he found himself in the entrance hall of the Grimmauld place. Sometimes it came as a surprise to him how cold this house was - not cold as in temperature, but in missing coziness and homefeeling. It was always perfectly clean, furniture was luxurious and looked good, but..the atmosphere in this house was like entering a mausoleum with living people. He shortly stared at the huge portrait of his father in the hallway; ever since he was little, he could've sworn the eyes of it followed him everywhere although it wasn't a moving portrait. The steps of his real father came down the stairs and Regulus had to hold back not to flinch. The ringing noise in his ears became louder, his palms were sweating even though he was cold and it was hard to get air in and out of his lungs - a glimpse into the perfectly polished window showed him that he was white as a sheet now too. Nausea and dizziness made it almost impossible to focus, but he just had to. He couldn't show weakness outside of the safety of his dormitory. "Thank you, Kreacher", he spoke to the houseelf, who disappeared into the kitchen after bowing towards Orion and Regulus. The young Black tried to maintain a serious and selfconfident face when he looked at his father: "You wanted to speak to me?" Orion looked down at his son with an expression completely unknown to the Slytherin. It looked like anger, but it didn't and it looked like disappointment, but it didn't. Could it be shame?"I've received a very interesting letter today, saying that you're friends with James Potter?", Orion asked dangerously calm, not even bothering to go to the salon. It was rare that he didn't care for these things at all...and it was worrisome. In his mind, Regulus stumbled over words and was unable to form a whole sentence, but somehow his mouth managed to do it for him: "No, father. I have no idea how someone could be under the impression that I'm friends with this person. He was annoying me and I tried to shake him off. That's all Mulciber saw in the Great Hall. It was him, who messaged you, right? He should let someone check his vision, I'm concerned he might turn blind slowly." Unfortunately, Orion didn't find that funny at all and came closer to his son until they almost touched: "You're becoming like Sirius more and more. I hope we don't have to regret letting you live and treating you well. You're our son. The heir of the family. You have a place to take and a purpose to serve. Don't make your mother and me regret putting our energy into raising you right. Maybe we have been too soft with you in the past. You need to grow up, Regulus. The Dark Lord has big plans with you and you will bring big honour to this family. Don't disappoint us. And do us a favour and cut your hair. You look ridiculous and like a wild." His hand landed on Regulus' shoulder, squeezing it just a bit too much, making it hard for Reggie not to make a pained sound."I won't...I promise, I won't", the young Black responded almost convincing; the only indicator of his fear to not live up to that was a little crack in his voice. But Orion didn't notice that or at least pretended not to. He let go off his son's shoulder: "Good. Would be a pity to have to use a little Cruciatus to bring back your memory of how to behave." These words being spoken let Regulus shortly close his eyes - the very vibrant memory of Sirius' screams under this curse would probably stick with him for the rest of his life. When he opened his eyes again, Regulus was alone. He waited for a heartbeat before walking to the door, hardly holding back the urge to run. As soon as the heavy door closed behind him, he did. Following the imagination that he could escape his life if he just ran long enough, he ran through the street like the devil was after him. He didn't see where he was running, but after a

while he was completely out of breath and stopped in the middle of a forest, gasping for the ice cold air to fill his burning lungs. Just now he noticed that his trousers were wet from the shoes to his knees and that he somehow had managed to run through snow. His mind was blank, he couldn't grasp even one thought until he got back some breath. When he started to sob, Reg could only think how ridiculous and pathetic he was to react like that. But he couldn't stop it. The Black felt like he was trapped in a small room with no exit except for the life his parents had planned for him. A life he didn't want and couldn't live. And James' and Sirius' words sounded like mockery in his ears - bittersweet, unaccomplishable mockery. There was no place he could go to. There was no way to escape. And especially not now, after being marked as someone he didn't want to be. The deatheater's mark seemed to mock him too, as the pain increased. The ringing in his ears was unbearable, his whole body felt like being in flames right now and the last thing he consciously noticed was that he fell into the snow, face first and sobbing.