(Beatris POV)

"Professor Lupin had sent in an owl in advance to tell that you had taken ill on the train Potter." Professor McGonagall started the conversation. I felt fumes built up in my face and without even looking I could tell that I was getting red.

(Why are you saying this in front of him? Everyone knows and now I am never going to hear the end of it. My whole life is ruined.)

It was then that I heard a soft knock on the door.

"Come in Poppy." Spoke Professor McGonagall.

Madam Pomfrey came bursting in the door.

"So it was you two hannn." She spoke as soon as she entered the room. "What have you been doing Potter girl." She eyed me weirdly. "Not up to something dangerous again are we?" She spoke while readying her things. "And you Nathaniel boy." She pointed towards him. "What happened to you? Are you also in with Potter? What will I do with you troublemakers." She sighed.

"It was a dementor, Poppy," said Professor McGonagall.

They exchanged a dark look, and Madam Pomfrey clucked disapprovingly.

"Setting dementors around a school" she muttered, pushing back my hair and feeling my forehead. "These two won't be the last one who collapses." She spoke as she also checked Nathaniel's pulse. "Terrible things, they are, and the effect they have on people who are already delicate"

"I am not delicate"

"Who are you calling delicate"

Two voices rang at once.

"Oh yes, my children you are not delicate at all." Madam Pomfrey smirked and instantly I turned red and lowered my face.

"What do they need?" asked Professor McGonagall. "Bed rest? Should they perhaps spend tonight in the hospital wing?" "I'm fine!" said Nathan, jumping up. "I don't need any medication. Sis saw to me already." He spoke.

"Oh yes silly me. How could I forget that someone here had a doting sister who was also an expert healer." Madam Pomfrey teased.

"Doting sister?" he spat. "More like the devil of a sister." He whispered.

"Did you say something darling?" Madam Pomfrey asked, she had not heard him.

"Nothing." He spoke as he walked towards the exit.

(Wow!!!!! He sure is scared of his sister.)

"What about you my dear." Madam Pomfrey turned towards me.

"Nothing." I also stood up. "I am in tip-top condition." Although that was kind of a lie but the thought of what Draco Malfoy would say if I had to go to the hospital wing was torture."Well, she should have some chocolate, at the very least," said Madam Pomfrey, who was now trying to peer into my eyes.

"She's already had some." Spoke Hermione who had, until now stood quietly in a corner. Everyone here had forgotten that she had accompanied me to the office.

(Nice save Hermione)

I gave her a thumbs up.

"Are you sure you feel all right, Potter?" asked Professor McGonagall said sharply."Yes, "said Beatris."Very well. Kindly wait outside while I have a quick word with Miss Granger about her course schedule, and then we can go down to the feast together."

I left the office and quietly stood in the corridor. As I left the room, I saw in a corner Nathaniel waiting there against the wall. He looked at me and for a second there our eyes locked.

"You fainted?" I heard his voice.

"What?" I was startled not expecting the question from him.

"I asked..." he repeated "Did you also faint?"

"Yeah, I heard you the first time!!!" I rebuked him.

No change.....

Not even a slight disturbance on his face.

Usually when I gave such an answer to anyone I received some kind of reaction but this guy was a brick wall. Either he knew extremely well how to manage his emotions or else he had bargained them to some devil for those extremely gorgeous looks. Oh God.

"Aaaaannnnnddd?" He asked again.

(Yeah right. The only expression you show is annoyance when talking to me.)

I could swear he was the worst. I could never get a read on him.

"Yeah, I did. So, what are you going to do now?" I nearly shouted.

"Nothing" He spoke instantly with that nonchalant face of his. "Just wanted to ask.... you know." And with that, he left me there staring at his back until he disappeared.

"Come on Beatris, let's go"

I did not move a muscle.

"Beatris? What are you looking at? I would have said that your face looks like you have seen a ghost but that's a norm here so what's up?" Hermione poked her head in my line of vision.

I jumped back.

"You scared me there," I complained.

"And you have not been responding to me for some time now." She looked happy for some reason and then we were joined by professor McGonagall and the three of us made our way back down the marble staircase to the Great Hall.

It was a sea of pointed black hats; each of the long House tables was lined with students, their faces glimmering by the light of thousands of candles, which were floating over the tables in midair. Professor Flitwick, who was a tiny little wizard with a shock of white hair, was carrying an ancient hat and a three-legged stool out of the hall.

"Oh," said Hermione softly, "we've missed the Sorting!"

We both sat down near Ron at the Gryffindor table. I looked around and obviously, Nathan was also sitting there. Near his sister. I looked back to the other tables and I saw a lot of similar faces. Malfoy, Crab, Goyal. Malfoy smirked as he saw but I ignored it.

"What was that all about?" he was curious to know.

"So, what happened was...." I told him the gist of it.

The rest of it was just a blur. I did not remember what actually happened but there was something about a new defense against the dark arts teacher. Hagrid was also teaching something. My mind was totally out of it. The only thing I caught a gist of was that there were dementors stationed at our school.

"As you will all be aware after their search of the Hogwarts Express, our school is presently playing host to some of the dementors of Azkaban, who are here on Ministry of Magic business." He spoke. I remembered that Mrs Weasley had said something about Dumbledor not being happy due to the Dementors.

(So this is what she was talking about at that time)

I wondered.

Then there was the feast. It was as lavish as always. We all greeted Hagrid. And after all that we moved towards our dorms.

Through the portrait hole and across the common room, the girls and boys divided toward their separate staircases. I climbed the staircase and moved up to the familiar, circular dormitory. Looking around I had only one feeling. Bad start or not I was back home.

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(Nathan POV)

Deep in thought, I missed the feast again.

I seriously needed to let go of that habit. It had kind of become a norm at this point. Something happened at the start of the year, and I always forgot to eat, thinking about it. It was the third feast that I was missing. What was the problem this time? Beatris.

Yeah, I know I know, this was totally not okay. I was being a hypocrite. But I could not help it. It all happened automatically. She was the only person who fainted beside me.

(Why did she faint?)

I asked myself.

A dementor could do that to anyone, sure….. but it felt off. She was strong….. for a girl of her caliber, who had never been exposed to magic before, she had accumulated a lot of achievements. She was definitely sharper than she let on, always standing tall no matter what nonsense Malfoy or anyone threw her way. People like her didn't just crumble because of a dementor.

A gnawing feeling settled in my chest, an ache that I couldn't quite place. What if it was something more? What if... she'd seen something? The worst kind of memories? I knew better than anyone how dementors worked, how they clawed into your mind and dredged up things you thought you'd buried for good.

I ran a hand through my hair, frustrated.

(Fuck it all. This ain't got anything to do with me. Since when did she become any of my problems.)

This wasn't my problem. She wasn't my problem. The more distance I kept between us, the better. Nothing good ever came from associating with the likes of me.

(What if she was hiding something? What if she needed help and wasn't asking for it?)

Even though I pushed away all the thoughts they came back to haunt me. Just like my own past. I of all people knew how it felt to be needing help and not having anyone to rely on. I knew how it felt to grow without having any adult to rely on.

"UGH..." I ruffled my hair.

All those thoughts clenched around my chest like a vice, and I hated it.

By that time the feast was over. I got up from my seat.

Letting out another sigh, I turned back toward the dorms. I needed to get there before the rest of the Gryffindors. Obviously, I knew the new password for the dorms, the perk of having a sister who was a prefect, and the last thing I needed was to run into her again tonight. The less I saw of Beatris Potter, the better….. for both of us.