

When I will see you in heaven

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It was in the early morning hours when Damon Salvatore left the impressive and old house his brother and he lived in. It was really not normal to see him outside that early. Usually he loved to sample the pleasures of a bloody night and a restorative morning. But this day was different. Today his walk won't guide him into the Grill to indulge in some drinks. The barstool next to him was empty for exactly one year now.

In the front yard he raised his gaze and looked into the sky – into heaven. For minutes he just stood there, staring at the dark blue of the cloudless sky like a beautiful and sad statue. His eyes seemed to mirror it... Blue sky and an upcoming sunny day – what a parody on the cold and darkness within his heart right now. Clouds, storm and rain, maybe thunderbolts – that would work much better than the raising SUNLIGHT. Everyone who could see Damon right now would realize that special and dangerous gaze he was showing at that moment. That gaze, that mode that was able to swear up fog or storm.

But nothing happened. He calmed down – for now. After a short look at his blue Camaro he decided to walk. Moving was good. Moving felt alive. Especially fast moving and he wanted to move fast, he wanted to run. He didn't realize anyone or anything on his way. He was like flying among shadows and some single splashes of light. His surroundings became blurred and nearly disappear. Nothing seemed to be important anymore. It was just the wind and him. Connected with the breath of nature he felt free for a short time.

And way to fast he arrived at the old wrought-iron portal. He opened it slowly and it welcomed him with a creaky noise. Slowly he passed the entrance and walked along some old gravestones. Some of them maybe wouldn't be filled that soon without his help. But the one he wanted to visit today was a nearly new grave, a grave he never wanted to fill – okay, he killed this man several times, but ALWAYS in the knowledge that he will come back – okay, not always, but since the second time.

It was easy to read his mind now. All the memories came back, all the unspoken words and all crazy actions they did together. *They were a real team badass. Damn. How could he have been so egoistic and mean to leave me alone with all those crazy kids? How could he have been so ballsy and arrogant – and dumb – to think he just could go?*

He stopped in front of a gravestone, pointed at it and finally started to talk for the

first time since he woke up. His voice sounded throaty. "Hey, Bud! You know what you did to me? You were the only one who was not crazy and childish here! ... Okay, finally you were crazy too but that doesn't matter now." And I could read between the lines: *How could that stupid history teacher let him down – him, the bad and dangerous vampire?! Why did he attack him back then? Weren't they friends? Wasn't he Damon's only friend?*

And knowing about his thoughts behind the words was hard, very hard. *I didn't want to kill you! I wasn't myself, dude! We both had no choice. Fate hit us and we failed. There is no second-chance-option, no button that I could press to come back. Lift your face again and you will look into mine, scream or just whisper and I will hear you. But you have to stay downstairs and I have to stay upstairs.*

I really wished so much to come back, to stand next to him looking on the damn tombstone of someone else. Okay, he wouldn't visit many other graves. There were only two other people he really and deeply cared about and if one of them would die, he would finish his own existence too – I was sure about that. So my grave was maybe the only one that got the dubious honor of that rare visitor.

"Now I need to drink for two. Can't share this bottle of Bourbon with anyone else..." With those words he raised an open bottle of old Bourbon – his favorite one I noticed immediately – to send his former friend a toast and take a big "sip" of the golden liquid. "My naïve little bro wouldn't appreciate this honor enough", he sighed und drank again.

His eyes scanned the little, well-kept grave. Fresh and nice smelling flowers were lying in front of the big grey stone. I saw the question showing up in his eyes: *Someone must have been here before... but who?* All people who would care about this grave were almost dead – more or less. "Whoever was here before doesn't have any taste... they look ugly as sin!", he muttered. Maybe he was just miffed about himself and a bit jealous because he didn't bring flowers too. Maybe he just thought that those colorful flowers didn't match a former history teacher and vampire hunter.

"You know what? If I get drunk and kill someone while feeding later, this will be your fault! You get it?" He grimaced and sat down at the next available tombstone. For a moment I was wondering what Mister Lockwood would think about Damon sitting on his tombstone. Then I was focusing on my friend again. It was hard to imagine that he needed to be drunk to do stupid stuff. He was such an impulsive and irrepressible vampire. He did what he liked to do, said only what he wanted to say and felt a lot more than he would ever admit. He wasn't the one who shared his pain – neither with any person nor by writing into a diary. A lot of people were thinking that he had a cold and dead heart, but in fact I didn't know any man who loved, hated and fought with more passion than him.

Finally silence covered the scene – like he was waiting for my answer. *Yes, I got it. You miss me.*

Still silently he stood up, stretched and looked at the big grey table again. His eyes

were running along the few letters that were engraved into the cold stone: *Alaric Saltzman. He was loved.*

With the little smirk on his lips that he always had until I... disappeared... he squat, pushed the flowers aside and located the half-full bottle of Bourbon right in front of my tombstone. He nodded pleased when he rose again. "Way better, don't you think?" A last look up to the sky that was filled with the golden light of the morning sun now and he turned around to leave me – or at least my grave. *I might be gone but am still with you in the same time.* I knew where we would meet again. I knew about the place that was still taken who ever wanted to sit down there: Not only in a little well-known bar but also in a big and well-hidden heart.

I miss you too buddy..., I whispered – well knowing that he won't be able to hear me. Only the wind got up and blew into his face. He stopped and sent an inscrutable but a bit confused smile out to nowhere.

There was this one thing left that he needed to know:
I miss you too. And I am still with you.