Late Night Cry

By C. Jade Wyton

Tiffany, after an argument with her mothers, finds herself unable to sleep. Her sons hear her crying and come in to comfort her.

Contains depictions of negative self-thinking around relationships and sexuality.

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It was two in the morning, and Tiffany couldn't stop crying.

Today had been one of the *worst* visits she'd *ever* had with her mothers.

The boys had wanted to see them. And could Tiffany deny them? Of course not.

But, gods, she hadn't expected *that* conversation.

She'd had it a hundred times before with other people. With her friends, and teachers, and even sometimes with *strangers*.

But never her *mothers*.

It was different when it came from them….

Since they'd met Creedence, her mothers had seemed to decide that he and Tiffany should get together— That he would be good for the boys. That they *needed* a father figure and that it would somehow "fix" all of the bad behaviours they'd been showing lately.

She'd tried to argue with them, of course, but it was two against one and she'd barely managed to get a word in.

She could still hear her mothers' arguments in the back of her mind.

"*There's only so much you can do alone.*"

"*Exactly. And if you don't* really *need the extra hands, why are you always asking your friends for help or for babysitting?*"

"*It would be easier if you just split the responsibility with their father.*"

"*Or, honestly, it doesn't even have to be* Creedence. *Anyone would do at this point.*"

"*Mhm. Just bite the bullet, hon, and pick someone. For the boys' sake.*"

"*And your own.*"

"*You know you won't be young forever. It's easier to get a partner when you're young and pretty.*"

"*You'll regret being picky when you're older.*"

It made her so upset to hear that she thought she might be sick.

To basically be told to stop being "picky" or she'd spend the rest of her life alone and screw up her sons was—

It was….

She'd maintained her composure up until now.

She'd been able to pretend that her mother's words hadn't stabbed into her like knives, and she'd kept up a cheerful attitude all day as she'd cared for her boys and gotten them dinner and tucked them in bed.
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But now she just couldn't stop sobbing.

She was scared her parents were right.

Everything that had been happening lately —the issues with Constance, Logan's lashing out, Trent thinking he had to be responsible for everything— it was all her fault.

And now she could barely breathe as she buried her face into her pillow to muffle the wet, ugly noises that kept forcing their way out of her.

She was broken.

And now she'd broken her sons.

And everyone seemed to think the only way to fix them was to do the one thing she just couldn't seem to bring herself to do.

'*Mum?*' Logan's quiet, timid voice asked from her door; though Tiffany couldn't bring herself to look up at her son. 'Mum?'

'What's wrong?' Trent's voice joined his brother's, slowly accompanied by footsteps approaching her bed. 'Why are you crying?'

She couldn't stop crying long enough to say.

She tried to stop —she took a deep breath, and sniffed back the mucus in her nose and gills— but when she breathed out it all came out again and she buried her face deeper into her pillow.

Why was she so broken?

'What's wrong?' Trent asked again, and Tiffany felt him sit beside her on the bed. 'You can tell us….'

'*Mum…?*' Logan breathed, his hand finding the top of Tiffany's head in much the same way hers always seemed to find his when he was upset. He ran his nails over her scales gently, before climbing into bed with her and Trent and laying half-over her with his head resting in the curve of her back. 'Don't cry, Mum….'

'Yeah, it's okay,' Trent comforted, his head finding his mother's shoulder. 'Whatever's wrong, we can fix it.'

'Yeah.'

'Yeah….'

Another trembling, wet sniffle made its way from Tiffany as she desperately tried to stop herself from crying. And another loud, explosive sob escaped her as she tried to breathe it out again.

A hand pet her back, then, though she wasn't sure which of her boys it was.

Then, after a long, long moment of quiet, Logan spoke:

'Is it something *we* did?'

Tiffany felt her heart clench, at that, and managed to roll herself over so she could pull both of her boys into her chest. 'Come here. Come here, baby…. It's not you. It's not. It's *never* you, okay? You're both my perfect little angels. You're my *everything*.'

Logan's face buried into her, and he gave a heavy sigh. 'Then *why* are you crying?'

'It's…' she hesitated, sniffing loudly as she took in a shaky breath. 'It's… something someone said to me. That's all.'

'Who?' Logan asked.

'What?' Trent asked, his brow furrowing in concern.

'It's hard to explain,' Tiffany managed, choking back another sob. 'I just…. I

can't seem to do anything right by you lately. And someone pointed it out.'

'*Who* said that?' Logan asked, firmly, as he lifted his head and gave his mother a furious look. 'They're lying to you!'

'Yeah, and they're stupid,' Trent added.

'Who was it?' Logan asked. 'I'll beat them up!'

'No— No beating anyone up, *please,*' the last part came out sounding more like a blubber than a word, and Tiffany put a hand over her mouth as both her boys flinched. She sniffed again, wiping her snout, and let out a long breath. 'I'm sorry. I just…. I wish I could be a better mother for you. But instead I've hurt you both so badly….'

'*No,*' Logan mumbled, burying his face back into her stomach. '*You're good….*'

'Yeah,' Trent agreed. 'You're a good mum.'

Tiffany just made another wet sniffling noise and wiped her eyes. 'I don't *feel* like a good mother, I feel like….'

Like I'm broken.

Logan's face buried painfully deep into his mother as she trailed off, and Tiffany instinctively put a hand on the back of his head.

'I'm sorry, hons, this isn't something for you to worry about,' she managed, slowly pushing herself into a sit. 'I'm fine. I'm just… having a moment. I'll get over it.'

'You've had a *lot* of moments, lately,' Trent pointed out. 'Are you sure you're okay?'

'Yeah,' Tiffany said, taking a deep breath and forcing a more composed tone to her voice. 'Yeah. See? I'm already feeling better. I just needed to have a bit of a cry to get all the bad feelings out…. But I'm okay, now.'

'*I don't believe you,*' Logan mumbled, his grip around his mother tightening.

'Neither do I,' Trent agreed.

Tiffany just sighed, and lay back down. 'I promise I'll be okay. I just need some sleep,' she told them; feeling them both press tighter against her as she did. She knew there was no point in telling them to leave, then, so she simple wrapped an arm around each of them and, with a sigh, let her head drop into her pillow. 'Goodnight, boys. I love you.'

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