

# Regret On the Road to Redemption

*by ancientgirl*

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## Chapter 1

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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I wrote this a few days ago, after a brief conversation with Marquise regarding the end of HBP.

This is how I see Severus directly after fleeing Hogwarts.

All canon characters belong to JKR.

Thanks to June for helping me with the beta part of this.

Chapter 1

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning. He had doubled-backed several times between Hogwarts and his home at Spinner's End. After he was certain he was not being followed either by Death Eaters, Aurors, or anyone in the Order, he and Draco made their way to a small cabin on the edge of the Forbidden Forest opposite Hogwarts.

Albus himself had given him the wards to allow for entry after he had completed his "task." When he walked inside the small structure with Draco, the boy had been shaking, both from the cold and from all that had happened.

For his part, he felt numb. He had done what both Narcissa and Albus had asked of him. He sat down wearily on a chair next to the fireplace, and hung his head low. He looked into the fire grate as though expecting an answer to all this lunacy to spring forth from the soot. He turned his head as he heard Draco begin to sob quietly. It had all changed so quickly. The entire world was now so different, and it had happened in the blink of an eye.

Severus sighed deeply. How could he comfort the boy if he himself felt like dying? There were no words of comfort tonight. No, things would not be all right. No, they would not get better; and no, it would not all go away. He stood and guided Draco to a small room with a cot, and motioned for him to lie down. He walked to an even smaller bathroom and retrieved two bottles. He held one out to Draco.

"Drink this, and get some rest. We have much to prepare for, and you have a decision to make."

Draco looked at him; his eyes glittering with tears still unshed.

"I trust you will take what you could not do yourself into consideration," he said, "when you decide which side you truly wish to fight for."

Draco nodded in understanding, and then drank down the potion.

Severus turned and left, closing the door softly behind him.

The tall man placed the remaining bottle on the mantle of the fireplace. He leaned back against the wall. He was beyond exhausted. At that moment, he felt the burning of the Dark Mark begin to dissipate, weakening to a persistent and nagging irritation. He scratched his arm to quell the slight itching sensation he felt. Instead of the relief he so desired, he felt an increasing need for it all to disappear, for an end to come tonight, as he scratched the Mark. As the events of the evening played out in his mind, he began to scratch harder and harder. With every scene, with every voice seen and heard in his head, his fingernails went deeper and deeper into his skin. He scratched at the Mark, until he looked down and saw the blood slowly streaming down his arm and encrusting itself underneath his fingernails.

No matter what the plan had been, no matter how it had been discussed and carried out, no matter what the reasons were for doing it, nothing would ever take away the fact that he had killed the one true friend he had ever had, the only person who had ever truly trusted him all these years.

"Damn you, Albus. Why did you make me do this?" He drank the bottle of Dreamless Sleeping Potion and felt it take over his body. "Please, let me forget; if for only one night, let me forget."

He slowly walked to the small cot in the corner of the room and dropped his weary body atop the cold blanket. As he felt himself slowly edging towards the peaceful world of dreamless sleep, the figure of an old man emerged from the shadows and slowly approached the sleeping form of Severus Snape.

"It was the only way, Severus; it was the only way." He laid his hand on Severus' forehead and looked down at him. "Sleep now, my friend, for we have much work and a long road ahead of us."

The End

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Well, that's my vision of what happened. I hope you liked it.