

Early Mornings are Best

by blue artemis

What does Severus find when he is out for a run? And what does he do about it?

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Chapter 1 of 1

What does Severus find when he is out for a run? And what does he do about it?

Severus had always liked to run. As a child it had been a defense mechanism, but he'd learned to enjoy the feel of the ground beneath his feet, the joy in movement for its own sake. As a bonus it kept him in good physical shape, which the healers said was a significant part of his recovery after Nagini's attack.

When he was cloistered with the Dark Lord, he was stifled. He could not run as he wished, and magical treadmills were not any more exciting than Muggle ones.

Now that he was back at Hogwarts, not as Headmaster but as the Defense Against the Dark Arts Professor, and Deputy Headmaster under Minerva, and learning to enjoy life, he had started to run again. He preferred the early mornings when the air still had that crisp feeling and the dew was still sparkling on the grass.

One Monday morning he headed out toward the lake, as he always did, to do a circuit, then return to his duties when he almost breezed past something that brought him to a standstill. There, on the banks of the lake, sitting on a flat rock was Professor Granger, naked as the day she was born, sitting quietly with her back towards him, in contemplation of the sun rising over the water.

Severus decided to leave her to her meditation or contemplation or sun worship and continued his run. He failed to see her turn her head at the sound of a breaking twig and smile at his departing back.

The same occurred for the next week. The following Monday, he went past her spot on the lake, and she was not there. He realized he was disappointed. Her beauty had added to the joy in of his run. He returned to the castle almost despondent. He sat down at breakfast, then noticed that Professor Granger was not there. He ate as swiftly as he was able without resembling a Weasley, then rushed to her quarters. Once he got there, he could not decide whether to knock or not when the decision was taken from him by Hermione opening her door.

"Do you want to come in?"

"Yes, if you do not mind."

"Come in, then."

Severus entered the room quietly. He looked at her carefully, noting her expression, then asked, "Are you all right?"

"No, I am not. Apparently the reason Ron broke up with me was that I wasn't attractive enough for him. He got nice and drunk at the pub and announced it to everyone. I'm bookish, boring, pushy, bossy and ugly. But he felt sorry for me, which is why were were together for so long."

"I don't believe you two had a relationship that lasted more than two weeks."

"We didn't. But it seems that Ron had a fantasy relationship with me. And I was still bookish, boring, pushy, bossy and ugly. Do you know the worst part? Everyone

laughed. Not one of my friends bothered to defend me."

"Then, they are not your friends." Severus stopped for a moment, took a deep breath and then continued. "Hermione, you are not boring, pushy or ugly. The way you look out on the lake is one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen in my life. You look like a water nymph sunning herself. And it is not just your body that is beautiful. Your mind is incredible; your heart is one of the greatest I've ever met. You are a treasure. I only wish you were mine."

"What was the last thing you said, Severus?"

"I said I only wish you were mine."

Hermione stared at him for a while, looking for what, Severus didn't know. Just when hope began to turn to despair, she rose up, put her arms around him, and kissed him passionately.

The next morning, Pomona turned to Severus and asked, "Why do you run?"

"I enjoy it, Pomona. And you never know what kind of treasure you might find."

Prompt from janus: 4. Severus likes to exercise in the mornings. What treasure does he find when he goes running down by the lake?

A/N: Many thanks to slytherinlaurel for the beta!