

Journey of Darkness

by LivingTheDream

How does one set out on the path of darkness?

One

Chapter 1 of 1

How does one set out on the path of darkness?

Severus Snape looked around at his dorm mates, making sure they were asleep. Reassured by their deep, rhythmic breathing, he pulled an ancient tome from under his mattress and opened it where he'd left off the night before. He'd spent the summer rummaging around in his grandmother's attic, trying to squirrel away all of the books before his mum saw them and sold them.

I know we need the money, but Gran would roll over in her grave if Mum sold them. They've been in the Prince family for generations.

It helped that most of the dusty books were on the Dark Arts. He was trying to supplement his arsenal against the increasingly infuriating Marauders. He snorted to himself in derision.

Marauders. As in, "those who go marauding." Invade, attack, ravage. Did they really consider what the word meant when they started calling themselves that? Probably not. Ignorant idiots. They were a gang of hooligans, who thought they were entitled to gang up on people simply because it suited them. "Marauders" is right. Lily may think Avery and Nott are evil, but as far as I can see, the hexes and curses they're experimenting with at least serve a purpose. We'll be able to protect ourselves from "Marauders" and get them before they get us. No Slytherins wander around the castle in gangs, shoving people into broom closets just because they're bored.

Severus had started reading this particular text, Secrets of the Darkest Art, because the title intrigued him. If any book could help him in his war against Potter and his gang, it would be this book. It sounded like it might have some really good ideas for doing horrible things to other people. And it did. But the most fascinating thing in the text was the horrible thing one could do to oneself. He was mesmerized by it. Apparently, there really was a way to become immortal.

It seems to be a fairly linear process. Killing someone without remorse fractures the soul. If you take the piece and have a place to put it, it keeps you from passing through the Veil if you die later. So, if you can find another body, or create a new one, and attach it to the broken off piece of soul, you're still here. I wonder what you have to do to keep the soul available for a later time?

Severus read the incantation and the act that one had to perform to make the fractured piece usable. And then he threw up.

Merlin. That's an abomination. Still, it's useful information to have, should the situation ever come up.

There was a cross-referenced appendix that discussed creating a new body. It required blood and bone from other people, some living and some dead. It was incredibly complex and would almost certainly require another person to do the actual magic, since the small smudge of soul, even attached to another person, wasn't likely to have much dexterity.

Well, that's pointless. I'll never have a mate I trust enough to help me create a whole new body. First, I'd have to tell them I'd killed someone. Then I'd have to trust them to want to help me. Then I'd have to trust they were actually skilled enough to pull the whole thing off. Not likely.

He pulled out his small leather-bound journal and began to make notes on the incantation required to capture the broken off piece of soul.

I wonder what it would be like to kill someone. I've certainly wanted to often enough. But the actual act would probably feel different than anything I'd ever imagine. I'm certain I could do it, though. I hope I don't ever kill anyone in a fit of rage. That would be careless. Careless leads to being caught. Being caught leads to Azkaban.

He took notes for another hour and then decided to get some sleep. Tomorrow, he would research more hexes to throw at Potter and his cronies. He'd found some intriguing slashing spells that looked like they could be modified.

Unfortunately for Severus, he didn't get back to his research for several days. Things had gone horribly awry. Sirius Black had led him into a trap, and the resulting debacle had left him almost eaten by the werewolf. He was seething with anger. After everything, *everything* the Marauders had done to him, the headmaster hadn't expelled *any* of them. And then he'd been forbidden to speak of it, as if *he* had been the one in the wrong. He pulled out Secrets of the Darkest Art again and set to work with a vengeance.

I will make them pay if it's the last thing I do.

A/N: Thanks as always to the bestest beta ever, sunny33.