

Language, Apprentice

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Teaching the subtle art and exact science that is Severus Snape...

Metaphor-mosis

Chapter 1 of 1

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For the 'Leather' Challenge on LiveJournal's GrangerSnape100 Community.

This is dedicated to my beta, stgulik, who machetes through the jungle of my metaphors on a daily basis.

"I can read you like a book, you know."

She smiled. "Really?"

He glowered at her, but the dark eyes told a slightly different story than the scowl. "You're looking at me in a distinctly salacious way, Apprentice Granger."

Hermione stretched contentedly. "I was merely thinking about the new metaphor I have for you."

He rolled his eyes and looked away. That meant he was pleased. Aside from teaching Hermione the subtle art and exact science that was Potion Making, Master Snape also gave lessons in the even more subtle art of his body language.

Hermione was a fast learner.

His gaze returned to hers. Those obsidian eyes of his were banked fires, always on the verge of conflagration. "Well, let's see. On occasion, you have thus far compared me to-" He ticked them off with his long, slender fingers. "Red wine, a panther, silk, an eel..." He paused, giving her a narrow-eyed look that was Snape braille for 'thank you'. "And chocolate."

"Now," he said, drawing his cloak around him like wings, the wordless code that indicated equal parts anticipation and insecurity. "What new food item or animal am I this week?"

She met his liquid, dark eyes. "Leather."

The eyebrows rose faster than he'd planned. She had truly flattered him. He hummed in deference to her choice. "Interesting. And what form do I take as leather?"

She pondered. "Buttery soft, when properly cared for; a nap that can either chafe or soothe, depending on which way you're rubbed. An irresistible scent: warm, animal, male, with a hint of green; smooth and rough in all the right places."

He tilted his head to the left. This shorthand had been easy to suss out; right was for berating, left was for flirting. “You’ve been giving it some thought, Apprentice.”

Hermione could barely contain her glee. He’d called her ‘Apprentice’ twice in one conversation. Feeling a little aggressive, then. She liked him that way.

He continued, “And how are these attributes manifested, hmm? Am I a sofa cushion?”

She tried that on for size. “Cool to the touch, until properly warmed, then soft to lie on.”

He smirked. He had four separate smirks alone. *That* one went with the tilt to the left.

“Perhaps a garment of some sort?”

“While the idea of you in leather trousers is intriguing, I’d sooner lace you up with your own skin. More supple.”

He blinked at her. The slower the blink, the more aroused he was. When it was done, his eyes were heavy-lidded and slid over her like silk. “Then it must be... a flail.”

Professor Snape, in leather trousers, lounging on a leather sofa, holding a leather whip. Nowhere’s a cocktail for lust if ever there was one.

Her voice was husky. “Like all good metaphors, sir, you are quite adaptive.”

He was as still as a statue. “Your observations may have merit, Hermione. Perhaps we can test the resiliency of this metaphor.” He gestured toward his chambers. “Shall we?”

Not only had she needed to learn the language, but the inflections and the timbre of the instrument that spoke it. That, combined with the head tilt, the smirk and the crossed arms spelled out a definite message.

It was as subtle as a hippogriff.

It translated into dark nights, and darker whispers, the warm scent of leather, the rich taste of wine and chocolate; the animal within coaxed out, then unleashed.

It was a language neither of them had yet perfected, but like all good scholars, they planned on researching until both reached the highest level of core competency.