

A Dark Lullaby

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The tale of a young Prince, come to Hogwarts in order to fulfill his destiny. He finds his destiny in not one, but two 'Princesses'! But he has a dark secret, and it could just tear them all apart.

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Chapter 1 - Black Cobra Among Snakes

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1 - Black Cobra Among Snakes

Harry Potter, the Boy Who Lived, was dozing away his History of Magic classes--much like the rest of the boredom ridden seventh years in his class. The first class of the year, and few would remember much of it. Professor Binns, like always, droned on without realizing the stupor he cast upon his students, going on and on about some terrible war between foreign dark creatures and wizards. It should have been a lesson of great interest, for the war included some amazingly bloody and devastating battles.

But, not with Binns teaching.

The young man, tall and skinny, his hair forever sticking out in every direction, refusing to lie flat, gave a soft snore, but even that didn't disturb the other students, or Binns from his teaching. Glasses askew, one would wonder how such a boy had defeated the Dark Lord Voldemort.

At least, that's what Hermione wondered with amused exasperation as she watched her best friend, and her boy friend, Ron, snore their class away. She'd end up sharing her notes and forcing them to study up on what she'd learned, just so they'd manage at least a P on their N.E.W.T exams. Not that she hadn't expected to, really. It happened every year they had History of Magic classes. She shared on other class subjects as well, but this one in particular was hard for the boys.

Without warning, there was a sharp knock on the door and then opened without waiting for Binns to stop his monotone droning in order to answer. Of all people, Professor Snape entered---heads snapped up quickly, as if sensing those sharp eyes upon them, or maybe it was the ever present cloud of anger/disapproval that wafted about him. Even Ron and Harry's head came up, curious as to the interruption in the usual schedule.

"I apologise for interrupting, Professor Binns, but I have a rather late addition to the class." the black haired professor said smoothly, his voice as greasy as his hair. He glanced back to the door, and murmurs started as a tall, handsome young man entered.

He was perhaps 6'5", with shoulder length black hair---bangs fell across his right eye, though the uncovered one was a deep black. Chocolate colored skin was stretched tight over well-toned muscles, his high boned cheeks smooth and his jaw well defined. It was clear to anyone that looked at him that he was wealthy---his left ear possessed four gold earrings spaced evenly along the rim, each finger on his right hand had a ring, mostly gold, on it and one had a large ruby in its center. The last piece of jewelry was a gold chain around his neck, with a similarly colored cross, which had a red stone in its center.

"This is Azrail Baliik." Snape continued, once the young man stopped just behind him. "My newest Slytherin."

"Ugh, just what we need." Ron muttered under his breath to Harry, who only smiled a little. He didn't think Azrail looked like the typical Slytherin, to be honest. He had a kind sort of face.

Across the room, Malfoy was peering curiously at the youth as well. Goyle was nowhere near him---they hadn't been getting on ever since the whole Room of Requirement issue.

"Hmm...Oh, well, " Binns said slowly, blinking at the newest student. "Just, have a seat right over there, then.." he murmured, waving his hand towards an open desk just behind Harry and Ron.

"Thank you, Professor." Azrail said, before he padded--no, it was almost as if he glided, so graceful were his moves---back to the desk. His voice was low and soft, hinted with a faint accent--Indian, perhaps. He lowered his bag and took a seat, lounging rather lazily so that he was slouched down in his seat. Professor Snape turned and strode out, his cloak billowing about him briefly with the motion.

The other snakes in the room peered around curiously at Azrail, but Professor Binns had already begun to speak again, and soon, people began to doze off once more.

"Hey, Azrail, right?"

The dark skinned man turned and looked down at a slightly shorter, very pale skinned and pale haired individual. Sharp gray eyes assessed him before a rather cocky sort of smirk curled on his lips and a hand was offered.

"I'm Malfoy, Draco Malfoy. Slytherin Prefect."

Azrail gave a small smile as he grasped the baby smooth hand in his own, slightly calloused, hand. "It is a pleasure to meet you, Draco."

"You as well. You seemed a little lost, so I thought I'd offer a bit of help." Draco announced, as if this should be a great honor for him.

Cocking a brow, he accepted the assistance, raising the piece of paper he'd been reading a moment before. "I am, indeed, a little lost. " he admitted. "I only just arrived today---I've never set foot in here before. Perhaps you can tell me where the Transfiguration class room is?"

"I have that class, too. Follow me." Draco said, turning and moving away confidently. Smirking to himself, the black eyed Azrail let his gaze flicker down Draco's form briefly before he moved after him, covering the distance easily enough with his long legs.

"So, where are you from, Azrail?" Draco asked, those gleaming gray eyes flicking to his face. Most of the right side of the face was shielded by messy black hair---,'Almost as bad as Potter's', Draco mentally scoffed---but he could see the lazy smile that curled his fellow snake's lips.

"Bangalore, India." he answered easily.

"Why come to Britain? Isn't there a school or something over there?" he

He chuckled. "No. Most wizarding parents home school their children, or hire private tutors. I was home-schooled myself, until very recently."

"Why not just finish home-schooling?"

"Ah...well, let us just say there were some issues with my family thought best solved whilst I was away from home." Azrail chuckled evasively.

Raising a brow, Draco let it go with a nod. Having been through enough of his own issues in the past year, it wasn't in him to pry into the troubles of others. They arrived at the classroom right before the class began, and took a desk together. It seemed to Draco that, it was the first time he'd had a real conversation or company from anyone other than his own parents. Ever since the Dark Lord had fallen, and Goyle had started avoiding him--mostly due to Draco's insistence--he'd been rather lonely. Maybe this was the beginning a friendship.

The week went by in much the same manner, and Draco began to come to the conclusion that Azrail talked more than he actually shared anything. The taller--and older, he learned--man was clever and smart, always managing to give an answer to any inquiry that made sense without actually giving up real information. He would make a fine member of the Ministry.

Despite this, they became fast friends, easily talking and doing their homework together. The only thing that Draco found a little less than pleasing about his friend was that he seemed to dislike any sort of teasing or bad-mouthing of the other houses. When asked why it bothered him, he had responded with absolute seriousness.

"Why should we mock them for the very attributes that make them special? The same goes for them."

"I dont' get it."

Azrail had sighed. "Gryffindors are brave and trustworthy. This is a good trait, something to be proud of. Ravenclaws are brilliant minds. Even the modest Hufflepuff, their resounding determination despite the odds against them, worthy of some respect."

"You're a strange one, Azrail." had been Draco's only response, to Azrail's amusement.

It was during one of their free periods, that the blonde began to notice something about the raven haired male. They were sitting under the tree by the lake, debating the essay they'd been given by Professor Snape on the twelve uses of Dragon's blood.

"Draco, I am quite positive that the last is its usefulness as an oven cleaner." Azrail maintained, lips pursed intently.

"But that's...silly. It doesn't seem reasonable."

"Look it up then. But I'm putting it in my essay." the Indian man said with a sigh, and began to scribble in tight, sharp writing onto his parchment. Draco scoffed but began to write as well.

It was only when he got a strange crawling sensation on the back of his neck that he realized something. Azrail was watching him. Very intently, too. He looked up and blinked, not really expecting to see him still looking--nor did the other bother to look away.

"What?" Draco asked, frowning.

A sly smile spread on the other man's lips and, for some reason, Draco felt his heart skip a beat. "Oh, nothing. I got lost in thought, is all." Azrail murmured, the single visible flashing before he looked back to his paper to continue writing.

Draco, shook his head and looked down, trying to ignore the strange stuttering of his heart. What was that all about?