

# **Blinded By The Dark**

## **a Snape adopts Harry fic**

Von Astrido

### **Kapitel 4: Of Snape manor and Interrogations**

#### Chapter Four: Of Snape manor and Interrogations

Snape was relieved. Before each school year began he would have to spend a month in the Hogwarts dungeons brewing enough potions to re-stock the hospital wing. He really hated doing that, but he knew that it was necessary. This time however, the Headmaster had told him that the hospital wing seemed to have enough potions to see them through the first semester of the year, so Snape was able to spend that extra time at home.

To celebrate his unforeseen extra time at his manor he had saddled one of his favourite horses for going on a long ride. He hadn't done this in years. The grooms he had employed for his twenty horses when he was at Hogwarts or otherwise engaged were riding them as well. He knew he had too many horses, but they were prominently bred and he didn't want to sell them. He thought that he sold enough horses each year. Snape had made quite a fortune with selling his bred horses.

His favourite horse was a black Frisian stallion. He was quite tall and really friendly, despite his enormous appearance. Snape rarely had the luxury to enjoy a ride around his immense property and decided that today would be a fine day for doing just that. The people from the surrounding villages never entered it. He had forbidden exactly that. Nevertheless some of the lads seemed to think it was funny to trespass his grounds. He was respected by most of the farmers for his money and possessions, because most of the land they were growing their corn on was his. But these youngsters didn't bother that and the fact that he could take away their fields easily, if he wanted, neither.

They didn't know he was a wizard, but they feared his intuition of knowing where they troubled him, because his wards alerted him and he immediately apparated near them.

His horse seemed to enjoy having his owner on his back again and galloped with an extra spring in its step. The wards alerted him to the presence of more intruders on his property, but he decided to continue his enjoyable ride and let Mensor take him right to them instead of apparating, as he normally would have done.

He already spotted the child from a great distance. Slowly he slowed down until he

halted a few feet from the child. He examined the child and guessed it was a girl, because she had the hair down to her waist. She was still quite young, perhaps eleven or twelve. She was really dirty and her clothes weren't in the best state either. Snape wasn't too surprised, because nearly half of the children in the surrounding villages looked similar. In her hand she held a branch, probably as a walking stick and her head was lowered.

"What does a lad like you have to do on my property? How many times do I have to tell the bunch of you to stay away?" he asked her snarling. She didn't answer, but fell to her knees.

"Answer! Or do I have to repeat myself?" he asked her menacingly. He had never had patience with children. Why he had become a teacher was a mystery to him. She shook her head no and buried her face in her hands. Snape didn't know what she wanted to say with that gesture. But then he heard a sob.

'I really don't know why she started crying now.' He thought and sighed inwardly. A Girl's behavior was always a miracle. He dismounted his horse and knelt down in front of her. He touched her lightly on her shoulder to gain her attention. However, the reaction he got startled him. She let out a piercing scream and flinched violently. Then she crawled away from him.

'What was THAT???' Snape asked himself. 'Normally, no one reacts this way, even if she was scared!'

She had started rocking back and forth, whimpering. Again, he tried to get her attention, but failed. He had touched her on her arm and she seemed to try to creep into herself.

'Why is she behaving like this? Stupid child.' He thought and just as he wanted to stand up again, she whispered something.

"Please, stop it. Don't... don't touch me!" he had barely heard what she had said. Then she went limp and fell sideways to the ground.

"Great. What do I do with her now?" he muttered. "I can't leave her here now, can I?"

'I wonder why she is so scared of touches. Has she been abused at home?' He sighed and looked down at her. The day had started so well when Albus told him he didn't have to go into school. But now he was stuck with that mucky child.

After pondering for a while, he decided that he would take her to his estate on his horse. Even he wasn't so cruel to leave her on her own. Snape scooped her up and carried her to his horse. How he was going to get her to his manor now, he wasn't sure.

Eventually, he had arranged her and himself on his horse. She sat astride in front of him, her back towards him. He was holding her steady with one arm around her waist, the other one held the reins. In walking speed they rode to his manor. Snape needed half an hour to get back. When he was there, he knew that he would have to drink a potion or he would be sore all over the next day. He wasn't used to riding for so long anymore.

The grooms were working in the stables and he gave his horse to them to look after. They were looking curiously at the girl, but they knew not to ask. Nevertheless, he shot them a stern glance to silence them.

Then he carried the unconscious girl to an unused bedroom. Once there he called for a house elf to bring him warm water and a cloth. Meanwhile, he went to his lab to fetch some potions the girl might need. He sensed magic within her, powerful magic, but he didn't recognise her as one of his students. He found that quite odd, because all magic children in and around London went to Hogwarts. But because of the magic he took her to his manor and not to a muggle doctor. She would be pretty scared to see the elf otherwise and ask too many questions about his potions. Maybe she was still scared about the elf, but she would understand.

She was too small to be in the upper years, but she should be at Hogwarts already. Second year probably. Funny, that he never had seen her yet. Or he merely didn't notice, but he dismissed that thought quickly. He remembered every child he had in his lessons. Maybe she was a witch, but never accepted the Hogwarts letter. If she was from the villages, that would be quite understandable. Some of them were so poor they barely could nourish themselves.

When he returned the elf had done its duty and the girl was awake again.

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Harry groaned. Everything hurt. His eyes fluttered open, but he was used to seeing nothing. He had lived with it long enough now.

Then he listened for sounds that would tell him where he was, but there was nothing. It was dead silent. Not a trickle of water, not even the whisper of the wind. He became scared. Normally there were always some sounds around him.

Frantically, he groped for something he knew. He was lying on something really soft, he noticed.

'A bed?' he asked himself. 'Why am I am lying on a bed? Where am I?'

Before he could do something else there was the sound of a door opening.

His head spun around to face the incomer.

"I see, you are awake!" a voice commented surprisingly near. He remembered what had happened and fearful of what the other one would do, Harry moved a bit away. The professor had taken him to a house, but that didn't stop him from being wary around him. After all, Snape never had been nice and the two of them were completely alone.

"What's your name, girl?" the professor asked. He didn't know where Snape was exactly, but he was almost at the same spot he had been before.

'Girl? GIRL?? I'm no girl!! Why do you think I am a girl? Just because I've got long hair? Surely not, or?' he thought furiously. If the professor didn't know who he was, even mistakes him for a girl, he wasn't going to tell him who he really was. Even if he was confused that Snape didn't recognise him. 'Think, Harry! A name...'

He remembered a name that he had read in one of the old books that Dudley had discarded which then had landed in his second bedroom.

"Laures!" Harry answered hoarsely. His throat hurt. He hadn't spoken in a long time.

"That's no girls' name!" the professor remarked suspiciously.

"And I am no girl!" Harry answered harshly. He raised a hand to stroke his sore throat a

bit, hoping the burning feeling would fade. He noticed that he was still dirty and his matted hair fell in his face. He shivered imperceptibly and he was really hungry, though he felt like he wouldn't stomach it. He had barely eaten in the last weeks and surmised that his already thin frame looked equally.

At some point, he wondered why Snape hadn't noticed his scar - and therefore him - as it was quite obvious normally. Maybe, he thought, there were too many other scars on his face or his scar had gone less red as it hadn't hurt when he had been in wilderness and was now like every other scar would be - a faint white line.

"Ah!" the professor uttered, his voice slightly tainted with surprise.

"Sit up!" Snape demanded shortly after.

'Huh? No biting comment on a boy being queer, because he looks like a girl?'

Harry felt somewhat unsettled, but then he reminded himself that Snape didn't know who he was. He tried to do what he was required, but he failed. He felt weak and had had closed his eyes again.

"May I help you?" Snape asked gently.

'Huh? So nice all of a sudden? What's up with him?!' Harry thought astounded.

"You can try." Harry replied cooperatively. He didn't like to be touched, but he was thirsty, and if he was going to get some water, he would at least try to sit up. Harry thought that it was a wonder Snape paid attention to the prior incident at all.

When Snape touched him under his right armpit to lift him, though, he freaked out. He whacked the hand away and crawled back until he was pressed against the headboard, shuddering. Shielding his head with his arms, he tried in vain to calm down. He started crying and soft whimpers escaped his lips. He didn't know why he had reacted this way, because he hadn't wanted to. The small boy hoped he wouldn't be punished.

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He sighed. The girl, no, the boy wasn't easy to handle. He didn't know anymore what he could do to make him drink the potions without having a fit. He had never dealt with children that were abused to such extent.

He hadn't wanted to use his magic to force the child to cooperate, but he saw no choice. Slowly he drew his wand and cast a strong calming spell and then a sleeping charm.

The effect was immediately and Laures sunk down on the pillows. Snape carefully fed him the potions directly afterwards. He didn't know when Laures would wake again, if touching caused him so much panic. He was just sleeping normally after all.

After a few difficulties Snape got Laures to down a pain-numbing and bruise-fading potion, a nourishment and a dreamless sleeping draught.

Then Snape carefully undressed him. Yes, the child was telling the truth. He was definitely a boy.

What he saw on his small frame was scary. Laures' body was covered over and over in mud, bruises and cuts. His ribs stuck out oddly, because he was so thin, and he saw that a few of them had been broken. He was no medi-wizard, but he knew spells to detect injuries. And Laures had a lot of them. He instructed a house elf to find his salve that healed the cuts.

Meanwhile he took the cloth and washed Laures gently. When he was free of dried blood and mud, Snape saw that the boy was covered in even more cuts than he had thought.

The house elf arrived with the jar and Severus rubbed the salve gently on Harry's skin. The minor cuts closed completely and left no scars behind. The bigger ones left red marks that would fade in a few days after more application. The bruise-fading potion was working as he could see, but Laures bruising was so severe that he would have to put salve on them later, too.

Then Snape detected an oddly shaped cut on his forehead. It looked similar to the famous scar the Potter boy had, but he surmised that it had to be an unfortunate coincide that the cuts were shaped like this, because Laures was so much younger and looked fairly different than that spoiled brat. For one thing, Laures' eye colour was a faint red mingled with light green. But he would ask him about the scar later.

When he had taken care of Laures' injuries as much as he could for the time being, he searched for some pyjamas that would fit him best. Eventually, he dressed him in a pair of his that he used to wear when he was younger, when he had been young. They were still too big for Laures, but he had no smaller ones. He tucked him in and left the room.

He would have to ask him about his home and such later.

The next day Snape looked after him a few times and always found him sleeping.

'Seems that he needs the sleep.' he thought and carried on with his daily routine of brewing potions for fun and invention.

He didn't have to care for the animals he owned, because the house elves were feeding most of them And the grooms took care of his horses. They were surprisingly muggles who came from the village near by. The owls and the cat were fed by no one, they got there food themselves.

The next time Snape looked after Laures he saw that his cat seemed to like him, as she lay curled up next to him on the pillow. He didn't know what to think of Laures and remained standing in the doorway for a while. It was comforting to watch his chest rise and fall slowly. His face couldn't be seen clearly, because the comforter and his long black hair were covering most of it.

He didn't like children in general, but somehow Laures didn't bother him as much he thought he would.

Then Laures stirred, but he didn't wake.

He decided it was best to go and went to tell Albus that he'd picked up a young boy. He wanted Laures to be checked by Pomfrey. So he walked into his office and flooed to the headmaster's office.

To Snape's relief the headmaster actually was in his office. He wasn't fond of running through the whole damn castle to find him. Albus' eyes were twinkling like mad like they always did and he was sucking what was most likely a sherbet lemon, as the first thing he asked was whether Snape would like a piece of said sweet.

He declined like always and sat down unbidden in one of the arm chairs.

"Why are you here, Severus? I thought you would enjoy your deserved holidays or had there been a Death Eater meeting?" he asked kindly.

"No, Albus. Everything is fine. I just found a stranded boy who needs to be looked over

by Madame Pomfrey." he answered quietly.

"Oh, is that so. I'm sorry, but Poppy isn't here. She's on holiday with her husband." Albus replied chuckling, knowing that this answer would make the potions master angry. He was right. Snape sighed and said irritably.

"Great. I don't want to have the boy to spoil my free time."

"It's only three weeks until start of term, my dear. And I'll tell you as soon as Poppy is here again!" Albus told him.

"Then I will have to go to the infirmary to get some salves for the boy. Good day, Albus!"

"I have complete faith in your skills, Severus, that you'll do what is best. Good day!" Snape stood up and walked out of the office.

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Harry woke slowly. He was buried in soft material and inhaled the soft scent from the bedding drowsily. A content sigh escaped his lips. He had rarely felt so wonderful when he woke and wondered why that was so. He turned from his stomach to his side. There. He knew something had been different. The pain was nearly gone. He was only still a bit sore, he thought.

'How..?' he thought, but just as he asked himself, he remembered. He had been picked up by his professor and obviously taken to his home. He was definitely not in the infirmary of Hogwarts, because the beds there weren't this soft and fleecy.

Suddenly he was taken from his reverie when something meowed. Frightened he held his breath and pressed his eyes firmly shut, not that it made any difference. His heart was beating rapidly.

Then a similar sound repeated. Slowly his mind caught up. He realized that the sound was uttered by a cat that sat shockingly near him. Cautiously he resumed breathing and his pulse normalised somewhat.

Then he felt gingerly around himself, until his fingers touched the soft fur of the cat. He sat up and took her into his arms. The cat seemed to like that and began to purr loudly.

Harry sighed and cradled the cat a bit closer. If it hadn't been for the fact that this was his professor's house he would have liked it here. But maybe he did nevertheless, he wasn't certain.

After quite a while had passed in undisturbed peace and silence, there was a knock on the door.

"Come in!" Harry called quietly. The door was opened and closed again.

"Obviously, Socrates likes you. Normally, he's more reserved to strangers." he was greeted by Snape who came into a halt somewhere to the right of him.

"Who? Oh, you mean the cat." The raven haired boy replied. "She's nice! May I ask why you are here?"

"Yes!" Snape answered. "I want to ask you a few questions now, since you weren't able to do so the last time." He stated calmly.

"Oh, okay!" Harry shifted into a straighter and more comfortable position so that he

could face Snape.

He heard Snape moving, but he wasn't sure what he had done, though he assumed Snape had sat down.

"So, let's start. You said your name is Laures. What's your surname?" he asked promptly.

The small boy began squirming inwardly. He didn't want to tell Snape who he was as he was certain that he would be mad at him for not telling him at the very beginning. Harry feared, the potions master would be furious and then sent him away again.

He didn't like Snape, but here he would be safe. Snape's house was most likely as heavily warded as his uncle and aunt's house. Harry supposed that he might stand the potions master as long as his wrath wasn't directed at him.

"Uhm... do I have to tell you? I don't like the name." He asked cautiously. How he would have liked to read the face of his professor now. It was best to know at least slightly in which mood he was to response to that. But now he had to rely on his hearing and he didn't know whether he could identify his mood by his voice. Sure, he had adjusted to being blind, but that didn't include deciphering people's moods.

"It would be easier to get you back to your family." Snape answered vaguely.

'Great!' Harry thought and hung his head. 'I don't want back to them!'

"I have no family." He replied instead.

"No? And where did you live until now?" the professor asked sneering.

"I have no parents!" the small boy insisted. "I lived with relatives, but they sent me away."

'No need to tell him, I was dumped in wilderness after I got beaten to a pulp. I think it's better to leave the details out.'

"And why did they send you away? Where do they live anyway?" Snape went ahead.

"Er.. they... they don't like me!" he said in a rush.

-"Where do they live?" he asked again.

"They.. they live in Surrey!"

He added quietly and bit his lower lip nervously. His throat hurt again and his unseeing eyes were still turned to his lap and the cat in there.

'I hope that's inaccurate enough.' he thought. 'Why do I tell him that at all? He doesn't need to know these details.'

"Why don't they like you? And did you really walk all the way here? That's more than 30 miles!" He ascertained suspiciously.

"Uh.. I.." he stopped and merely shook his head no. Then Harry realized it would be strange if he didn't ask for the professor's name. From the outside the raven haired boy didn't know Snape.

"Can I ask you a question?" he inquired whispering.

He just knew that the professor's eyebrow had risen, even if he didn't see it. It was too typical for him.

"You may." He answered slowly, obviously thinking hard.

"Er..What's your name?" The small boy stuttered sheepishly.

"You can call me Mr. Snape or Sir, if you like!" he said after a small pause.

Harry nodded affirmatively.

"Are you hungry?" Snape wanted to know, but Harry declined and asked instead.

"Sir, why are you taking me in? You didn't have to do that! And what can I do while I'm here?"

"You were in an awful state when I found you. Even if I don't like children, I wouldn't let one die. And I can bring you a few books later if you want to." He explained in an even tone.

"But-"

"No buts! Rest now!" he interrupted Harry.

"But I can't read." He blurted out before Snape could interrupt him again. The small boy was sure that the professor looked at him with utter disbelief and shock after this confession.

"You can't? But you are at least eleven or twelve years old." Snape asked astonished. "It's not that." he replied overlooking the remark about his wrong age. After a while he continued, because the professor seemed to wait for an answer.

"I don't want to tell!" he mumbled, fidgeting with the sheets.

"Sure, you don't. But someday you will have to tell me!" Snape replied. Harry could hear him standing up.

"I'll come back tomorrow. It's late. Rest for now!" he said somewhat reassuringly and closed the door softly behind him.

'Great. What had that been all about?' he thought whilst stroking the cat absentmindedly. 'He had definitely behaved different. And the questions had been more than odd. Why did he say, he doesn't like children and then asks such personal questions which have nothing to do with my residence? I don't get it.

And what did he say? I'm eleven or twelve? Surely, I'm not looking that young, am I? I'm sixteen, for heaven's sake!

Then I would really like to know why he didn't notice my scar since it is in plain sight normally. Did something happen to it? Alas, I don't think that I can ask these questions! He would only get even more suspicious and I don't need that!

It would be great if he never knew that he took care of me, the bloody boy who lived. What would Hermione and Ron say if they found out? Ron would certainly throw a fit and wouldn't talk to me for a week, because I had been nursed by Snape of all people. Though, I don't see what's so bad about him. Okay, he is never friendly to anyone, but that didn't revoke the good deeds he did. For once, he is spying in Voldemorts ranks, which in itself poses him in mortal danger only for helping the Order. Then, I can't count the times he helped me, even if I still don't know why he did it as he seems to hate me. And now he rescued me, albeit unintentionally.

I wonder what Sirius would have said to this. He would certainly have said something bad about the 'bat', as he liked to call him.

Sirius, why did you go? I miss the bad jokes you always made and the kindness you showed towards me. You were like a father to me! But now you are gone and it's entirely my fault. If I hadn't gone to the ministry, you would never have followed me and fallen through the veil.'

Silent tears rolled across his cheeks and dripped on the sheets where they vanished into nothingness. He lay down and curled into a tight ball under the covers. His heart ached, but he knew that he had to come around eventually, only not now. Crying the small boy fell asleep.



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