

**The Twelfth Century**  
by  
**The Dark Lord Insidious**  
(just call me Sid)

**A New Beginning:  
Zombies  
&  
Skeletons  
&  
Not So Elvin Princesses,  
Oh my!**

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**### Chapter 1 ###  
### Insidious ###**

Let's see. Where to start?

Maybe the simplest thing would be for me to be completely honest and forthright and own up to the fact that I'm a Dark Lord right here at the beginning. Some folks think that means I don't have any morals and am completely devoid of ethics. But really, that isn't the case at all. I mean, I have a great many morals; they just happen to be the morals of a self-serving narcissistic hedonist. It's not my fault that I am the greater good or that my personal happiness is the sole purpose of all creation. And as to the whole question of ethics, well, let's just say I've got the ethics of a backstabbing liar. I know it. And if you've got the least bit of common sense, now, so do you. So, really, it's not really like I'm being deceitful in the least (or could be -- in any way -- after an

admission like that right at the start). So, please don't come crying to me and saying I didn't warn you, when at some point in the future, it's come to pass that I've burnt your fields, raped your women, and sold your children into slavery...

But then, that may seem a little harsh, a little threatening, and maybe even a little over the top. And the truth of the matter is, it doesn't have to be that way.

You see, before I took my vows, sanctified my dying body, and underwent the transformation, I wanted to be an entertainer. No, it's true. Always did. I liked the idea of being a traveling minstrel, a bard if you will, going from kingdom to kingdom, performing in front of kings and queens for my nightly room and board. But then, since I don't really like leaving my crypt these days, am sort of allergic to the burning rays of the noonday sun (well, in truth it's more of an aversion than a allergy, really), and have yet to find the queen (evil or otherwise) who's honestly looking forward to lying down next to me and joining me in my eternal damnation and slumber for (um, like) ever and ever, it's pretty darn lucky for all of us that writing a spot of light fiction here and there seems to scratch my artistic itch.

So if you promise to laugh at my jokes -- even with the half-hearted insincerity of someone intent on saving their own wretched (and obviously worthless) hide -- well then, I promise to keep the cursing, killing, bloodletting, and stealing of souls to an absolute (caterwauling) minimum.

You have my word -- the word of fully ordained Necromancer.  
What more do you need?

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Anyhow, that little preamble aside (I have my code, I presume you have yours), for all of you young'ins out there, there was a time, not very long ago that existed (whether you believe it or not), when Mathematics was scorned and generally held in ridicule. Practitioners could not get their summations to equal and trigonometric functions were (well, let's just say, trigo-anything was) the stuff of legends.

Sure.

Nonsense, some of you will say.

The old man has gone off his rocker, his mind's turned to Dust, and he's had one to many nips of the Drip.

And if that be the case, then perhaps you fall on the other side of the Divide.

And rather, I should be saying that (once again, believe it or not) there was a time, not very long ago, when no one believed in Magic. Its practitioners were considered misguided fools, hacks, and/or conmen and even the simplest of enchantments fizzled and died before anything was made manifest.

Do you remember those days?

I do.

I spent most of my life -- and death -- laboring under such constraints.

But then, I'm not one to waste a lot of time bemoaning what could have been (ah, if only I'd know about the Calculus earlier), what should have been (me, Ruler of the Universe -- both known & unknown), or how much harder it was to do just about anything back then (seriously, today's youngsters have no idea how easy they have it). But like I said, I'm not one to focus on the past (all present indications to the contrary and notwithstanding).

But whatever, the point is (has been and always shall be) that way back during that initial time of contact legends were made. It was a time of change and opportunity, when a young (hey, I've still got a few good centuries -- maybe even in a millennium or two -- left in me, and back then a) Dark Necromancer with a good head on his shoulders (and one or two in his back pocket to spare) could make a mark for himself in this world, carve out a place to call his own, and sort of take control of his destiny (i.e. forge a future for him -- or her -- self, if you know what I mean, which by the time this tale is over, I hope that you do).

Besides, if you're going to try your hand at writing (for the first time, believe it or not) and you hope your tome gains any degree of notoriety beyond your immediate sphere of influence ('cause you know everyone in the Graveyard is going to take an interest... in pretty much

whatever I do), well then, it behooves one to choose their subject matter carefully (very-very-very carefully). And (believe it or not, which I shall henceforth assume that you do), the stuff of legends is exactly the sort of thing to which one should turn their quill.

And so, I shall.

It's simple, really.

{{{Chapter End}}}