A Spring Surprise

by IgnobleBard

Summary

Legolas hosts Glorfindel at the Greenwood spring festival, love ensues.

Notes

Written for Nuinzilien for the 2016 My Slashy Valentine swap.

Request - Give me traditions! Either the ones everyone loves, or the ones who drive you absolutely spare.

It was almost time for the spring celebration in Mirkwood and Legolas was returning home. He was glad too, after a three month stint near Lake Town helping to round up a group of outlaws who had been disrupting trade between the Lake-men and the Greenwood. He and Bard had caught their quarry just three days previous and the journey home had been blessedly uneventful for Legolas. Now he planned a good long sleep and a few hearty meals before the festivities were set to commence.

His travel through the Elven realm was festooned with flowers for the upcoming festival. The Silvan talan dwellers had garlands of flowers hanging from their trees with traditional tokens of love tied to them, along with a partner’s name. There were bright colored ribbons with names sewn on, plaits of sweet grass shaped to form Elvish initials, small cloth dolls with notes of undying devotion pinned to them. It lightened his heart to see the forest come alive this way. The only thing missing was the fact that he had no one to name a token for.
Still, he looked forward to the festival. For there would be much feasting and drinking, and the possibility of love hung heavy in the air. Spring always brought him hope.

When Legolas approached the stronghold, he saw the bridge was strung with blossoms and a carpet of woodland flowers covered the walkway. The doors were shut and no guards were present so he strode up to the door, said the password, and the gates swung open.

He was on his way to his rooms when Thranduil appeared in the hall coming toward him.

“I’m so glad you’re returned,” he said. “There’s going to be a celebration tonight I want you to host.”


“You certainly ask a lot of questions,” Thranduil said. “The correct answer is ‘As you wish, your majesty’.” He was only half joking.

Still, Legolas could not help but grin. “Very well, I’ll go get a quick bath and change. Is the celebration here or in the woods?”

“It will be here in the stronghold. I will be hosting the woodland revels. We have a very important guest from Imladris and I want you to host the formal ball here for the nobles.”

Legolas bit back a sigh. “So I get the stuffy, formal celebration while you get to have the real fun.”

Thranduil smiled and spread his hands. “The privileges of being king. Besides, this will be good practice for you. You never know when you might need to act in my stead on more important matters.”

“As you wish, your majesty,” Legolas replied with a little bow. He didn’t much like when Thranduil talked about grooming him for future duties. After what happened to Oropher, the Greenwood was not complacent about the line of succession like Lothlórien or Imladris. He never wanted to think of anything happening to Thranduil.

He started to proceed down the hall then turned back. “Ada, who is this important guest?”

“Glorfindel from Imladris,” Thranduil replied without turning around.

Legolas’ heart caught in this throat. Glorfindel? The legendary, re-embodied captain of Imladris? Legolas hurried to his rooms, wishing he was still on patrol.

He didn’t like the hurried preparations. He only had time for a quick scrub and not the leisurely soak he had been craving. No quick nap was possible, nor was a meal or even a snack. He cleaned up and dressed quickly in his formal silver tunic, finishing off his ensemble with a garland of spring flowers for a crown.

He entered the ballroom with a servant in tow, checking seating charts and lists of activities and music. Everything was in order. Galion was very efficient. All he had to do was attend the feast and the ball and try not to say anything to start the court’s collective tongues wagging.

"Let me know when Captain Glorfindel arrives," he told the servant. I would meet with him before the feast.

“As you wish, my lord.” The servant bowed and left.

Legolas had to admit those words felt good to hear. No wonder his father was so fond of them.
He sat down at the table to gather his thoughts and look over a pile of notes the servant had left with him when a man entered the ballroom, looking completely lost. Tall, golden hair, dressed in a simple tunic open at the collar and a pair of worn trousers, the man could have been anyone if not for the aura of light surrounding him and shining in his eyes.

This had to be Glorfindel. Legolas’ heart caught again at the sight of him. He had only seen pictures and tapestries depicting him, usually with sword in hand facing down a Balrog. Now here he was wandering the stronghold unescorted. Legolas forgot to be angry at whoever let Glorfindel loose. He was both captivated and terrified all at once.

Glorfindel, unaware of the effect he was having on the prince, walked up to the table. “Forgive me, your majesty. I am sorry to disturb you but I seem to have gotten lost. I gave my escort the slip so I could look around a bit, not realizing how confusing the layout here could be for an outsider.”

The ‘your majesty’ threw Legolas for a moment before he grasped that Glorfindel had mistaken him for his father. That, and the fact he couldn’t seem to locate his tongue, stayed him from an immediate reply. He simply stared until Glorfindel made a slight bow and turned to leave.

“I am sorry for disturbing you,” he said. “I will find my way.”

“Wait!” Legolas said at last, warmed when the golden sun again turned its rays to him. “I must ask your pardon as well. I had not thought to meet you this way. I am Legolas Thranduilion and I welcome you to the Greenwood. I will be happy to show you around.”

Glorfindel brightened, coming back as Legolas approached him. “I thought you were the king. I hope I did not give insult to either you or his royal personage with my error.”

Legolas smiled warmly. “It is no insult to be mistaken for my father. In fact, you flatter me. So, how is it you managed to lose both your escort and your way?”

An abashed grin lit Glorfindel’s face and all Legolas could think was how his humility made him all the more beautiful. “I got them talking about the upcoming celebrations then sort of fell behind as we walked. When the corridor took a fork I slipped away. It was improper of me, but I have heard so much of King Thranduil’s stronghold I wanted to explore. These caves are a marvel the like of which I have never seen.”

“While I understand the desire to strike out on your own, surely you realize protocol would dictate that you wait to be assigned a guide to familiarize you with your surroundings. Unless you had another reason for wanting a look around. Spying perhaps?”

The words left him before he had time to think them through and Legolas cringed inside. It was something his father would have said. It must be the crown that put such thoughts into his head he decided. He removed it and laid it on the table.

Yet to his surprise, Glorfindel acknowledged his remark with a smile and nod. “You caught me, Prince Legolas. You are very astute. I was, indeed, attempting to gather information about the Greenwood’s strength. Lord Elrond and I agreed that this visit was warranted since no word has come from your realm of late and the presence of Dol Guldur seems to be growing.”

“My father is aware of and is handling the situation,” Legolas said. “Our scouts tell us of the contagion spreading from the south and we are increasing our defenses and security to counter the threat. If the king has not sent word to the other realms, I am certain he has a good reason.”

“Thank you for your candor. One of my purposes in visiting is to let your father know that Imladris
and Lothlórien stand ready to aid him should the need arise.”

“He will be as glad to hear it as I am,” Legolas said, not at all sure how his father would take this news. Thranduil liked to think he could handle any situation on his own. It was a thread woven deep into the fabric of their family. “In the meantime, let me give you a tour.”

Legolas and Glorfindel set out through the maze of the stronghold with Legolas giving directions and shortcuts to aid Glorfindel in finding his way around. “I will also cancel your escort if you wish,” Legolas said. “I want you to feel a guest here, not a prisoner.”

“That would be much to my liking,” Glorfindel said. “I wearied of formalities long ago. They hinder more than they aid those who adhere to them. Would that I had learned that lesson sooner.”

Legolas had to wonder if he spoke of Gondolin, but he didn’t have the courage to ask.

As they walked, Glorfindel remarked on the garlands of flowers and love tokens that thronged the hallways and antechambers. “I see your people make the most of the spring bounty, even within the stronghold.”

“Yes, it is a tradition here to adorn the forest all around with flowers and the names of those beloved. One we adopted from the Silvans.”

“It is a very nice custom indeed,” Glorfindel said, examining a ribbon with the name Saelbeth on it. “I would imagine there are many garlands festooned with your name.”

Legolas felt himself blush. “No, none with my name. Who would be so foolish as to openly declare their love for a prince of the realm?”

“One of great courage I should think,” Glorfindel said. Something in his tone gave Legolas pause. His heart fluttered like a love-struck maiden but he played it off like Glorfindel was joking.

“Is part of your spy mission to seduce the prince?” Legolas laughed.

“No, that is a separate mission. One entirely of my own devising,” Glorfindel said with a twinkle in his eyes.

“And when did you devise that mission? We’ve only just met.” Legolas felt suddenly out of his depth.

“Do the Silvans have no concept of love at first sight?” Glorfindel asked. “For I know there is certainly Sindar precedent for it. It is why your people did not go to Aman.”

“That was a long time ago and I don’t believe it has been repeated,” Legolas stammered.

“Then perhaps it is time,” Glorfindel said. He leaned forward to capture a kiss, and though part of Legolas felt he should rebuff the impudent move, it was only a small part after all.

Legolas could only have dreamed of a kiss like this, a kiss that set off wizard fireworks in his brain, that kindled fire in his heart and loins. He was still young in the ways of the world in many respects but Glorfindel’s kiss made him feel he had walked the earth too long to have been missing this kind of passion.

When they parted he actually staggered back a little as though a physical bond between them had been broken. He could only stare in shock and a sudden, overpowering longing. A page came around the corner then, breaking the spell.
“My lord, the guests are starting to arrive in the ballroom. Also, I found this on the table,” he said, handing Legolas his woodland crown.

Legolas looked at it as if it were abhorrent to him but he took it and placed it on his head. “Thank you. Tell the others I am on my way.”

The page hurried off and Legolas said to Glorfindel, “I suggest you change your clothes before you come to the feast. While I agree with your dislike of formality, my father has other ideas and I would not like to see you held up to scorn within his court.”

“It is the crown,” Glorfindel said, as though he had read Legolas' mind earlier. He smiled and turned to go.

“Do you think you can find your way to your rooms and back?” Legolas asked.

“I think I am familiar enough,” Glorfindel answered with a wink.

"Too familiar, rather," Legolas thought, but smiled to himself as he made his way to the ballroom.

Legolas greeted the arriving nobles and took his place at the long table. Glorfindel, as an honored guest, would be seated next to him for the feast. While they all waited for Glorfindel to make his appearance, Legolas caught up with members of the court on the happenings in the Greenwood while he had been on patrol. At last, a page approached and told Legolas that Glorfindel would not be attending the feast but would come to the ball after.

A cloud of disappointment settled over the prince. So Glorfindel had been stringing him along. He let his defenses down and now the Noldo was making a fool of him in his own home. He began to think his father was right not dealing with the other Elven realms.

Still, as a prince, he could not let his emotions show so he feasted well and laughed merrily. He drank a great deal of wine and tried to decide which of the ladies of the court he would dance with first at the ball. His choice always sparked romantic rumors so he looked for a lady with a level head who would not add grist to the gossip mill.

When the feast ended and the ball began, Legolas hesitated to make his choice as the court ladies all glanced his way in anticipation. He was looking them over, feeling almost like he was judging livestock at a spring fair, when Glorfindel made his entrance. All eyes turned to the Elven lord and gasps and shocked looks filled the ballroom.

Glorfindel swept in, his golden hair and aura creating a nimbus at his head. He was dressed in fine leather trousers with silver studs at the waist and his shirt was white with intricate gold brocade. He looked like a hero of the elder days striding forth to conquest. But it was not his finery or his bearing that caused the crowd to gasp and whisper, for upon his upper arm he sported a wide green ribbon with the name 'Legolas' stitched in gold.

With the boldness Legolas was certain only this man in all Arda possessed, Glorfindel walked up to him, the son of the Greenwood’s greatest king, and held out his arm. “According to your custom, I am declaring myself for all to see. What is your answer, lord? Do you choose the ribbon or the crown?”

Without hesitation, Legolas removed his woodland garland and stepped into Glorfindel’s arms, signaling for the band to play. For a moment the crowd stood in shocked silence to see their prince in the arms of the Elven Lord but then they burst into a wild, whooping ovation, all formality and protocol forgotten.
Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!