Looking For A Golden Light

by Elizabeth (anghraine)

Summary

Darcy and Elizabeth in the ATLAverse, for the prompt "now explain why you glow in the dark."

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Darak didn't like the obscure Earth Kingdom village he'd had the misfortune to find himself in. He didn't like their muddy little stream and he didn't like the local dances and he didn't like Baelin's house (or relatives), and he didn't like the men of the village and he didn't much like the women either. Baelin couldn't possibly be considering staying here—

Except it was Baelin. He very well might.

Darak had never thought of himself as a sentimental man. Still, as Ru and Huan exchanged banal nothings over tea, and Baelin babbled about someone called Zhen, he couldn't help a sudden sharp longing for his own family and his own people. His gaze, almost of its own will, turned northward.

Baelin was still chattering at his sisters. Darak quietly excused himself and wandered out onto a small balcony. The stars were dim tonight, blotted out by the full harvest moon. At home, he and Kuro would be taking the opportunity to put their skills against each other, when each was at his most powerful, then perhaps teaching Jianka some advanced techniques that normally she couldn't yet manage.

The elders might not approve, but never mind them. His sister needed to be able to defend herself, even now. Particularly now.

His lips thinned. Darak glanced away from the moon, at the cheerful glow behind him, then back
to the moonlit night. He grabbed one of the waterskins he carried with him—really, three? Kuro had scoffed—and tossed the water over the ledge, bending it into ice as it fell. With another glance over his shoulder, he leapt over the railing and slid down. What Baelin didn't know wouldn't hurt him.

He recovered his water, put the waterskin back on his belt, and hurried away from the house, into Baelin's park. Here, he wouldn't be bothered by any other human being—nobody could have a legitimate reason to trespass at this hour. An illegitimate one, perhaps; Baelin had said something about poachers.

Darak strolled on, supremely indifferent to any danger. He would not have feared them at the worst of times. Walking under the golden moon in the heart of the Earth Kingdom, he did not fear anything. No earthbender but Avatar Kyoshi could threaten him tonight.

Fortunately, no trespassers—earthbenders or otherwise—crossed his path, and he ducked into the small wood at the edge of Baelin's lands. The trees all but blotted out the light of the moon and stars, leaving him in dark, peaceful solitude, until he caught sight of a dull, flickering glow, not far away. Perhaps the poachers were here.

He scowled and hurried forward, pausing only when he heard the crackle of fire. Darak's fingers curled around his waterskins.

He slipped through the trees, then stopped as the unsteady gleams resolved into weak bursts of flame, emerging from the fists of a young Earth Kingdom girl. Earth Kingdom by apparel and appearance, anyway; she was far too small to be the Avatar.

Interesting.

The girl, illuminated by the glow of her own bending, continued to practice what he could only assume constituted firebending forms. He didn't know any firebenders personally and had little understanding of the art, but her movements seemed a little awkward, untutored. But then, how would a young firebender find a master here? She must be talented, to bend even so well as this, with no proper training and no sunlight.

The girl stopped to scrub sweat off her brow and dropped to the ground, leaning an elbow on her knee. A small flame flickered on her other hand, then went out when she heaved a loud sigh.

Darak jerked away. She might be a trespasser, but she wasn't a vandal, and he certainly had no intention of attacking an untrained firebender in the middle of the night. There was no appropriate reason to keep watching her. Besides, Baelin might very well have missed him by now, if he'd finished listing Zhen's many perfections. Darak headed back towards the house without another glance at the firebender.

There was something familiar about her, he thought, and felt a vague sense of interest. Perhaps he'd see her again.

End Notes

Darak = Darcy
Baelin = Bingley
Ru = Caroline
Huan = Mrs Hurst
Zhen = Jane
Kuro = Colonel Fitzwilliam
Jianka = Georgiana

Darcy would totally be a stuck-up Northern waterbender. I could see Elizabeth as just about anything else, but fire worked best for the prompt. I really wanted a fusion that kept Austen's domestic focus and wasn’t about epic war and Avatar States and stuff, so it was a bit of a challenge!

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