of pianofortes and wrackspurts

by Sybill

Summary

Georgiana’s not sure what’s more surprising - the strange girl who appeared in her drawing room out of nowhere, the dress she’s wearing, or the Wrackspurts she keeps talking about.

It was a quiet spring morning, and Georgiana Darcy was playing her pianoforte, running through a difficult section of the new sonata her brother Fitzwilliam had brought her from town the month before. Beethoven was almost too daring, but Lizzy had persuaded Fitzwilliam that eighteen was quite old enough to be trusted with a little Beethoven, and Georgiana was glad of it. Her music was one of her greatest joys, even though she still preferred to practice alone, at least until she was very sure that she wouldn’t make mistakes.

It was the movement in the corner of her eye that startled her now. No one came in during her practices, unless they were Fitzwilliam or Lizzy, of course, but her brother and his wife were visiting her family. But that had definitely been…

Georgiana turned to look, and gasped.

A strange girl was standing in the corner of her drawing room, looking almost as confused as Georgiana felt.

“Excuse me,” she said, politely, when Georgiana’s fingers stumbled to a halt. “It looks like I’ve got lost. Could you point me to Professor Campbell’s classroom, please?”

“I beg your pardon,” Georgiana said.

They looked at each other for a long moment. Perhaps Georgiana should have shouted for Mrs Reynolds, but the strange girl didn’t seem dangerous.
Finally, the girl sighed. “Merlin’s beard,” she said, nonsensically. “Seamus must have mixed the potion incorrectly. I knew I shouldn’t have let him talk me into being lab partners, but that boy could charm the wings off a Wrackspurt.”

There were a thousand questions milling in Georgiana’s brain, but, curious, she settled for the first. “What is a Wrackspurt?”

“Oh,” the strange girl said, crossing the room and sinking into a chair near Georgiana’s piano bench, “Wrackspurts are lovely. Though very shy creatures, really. I should have brought my Spectrespecs – but then, you see, I haven’t come prepared, because we weren’t supposed to meet any people until next month. Thanks, Seamus.”

“Seamus brought you here?” Georgiana asked, attempting to make sense of this bewildering girl. Her dress was bright yellow, incredibly short – Georgiana could see her knees – and had a very large number of ruffles. “Is Seamus one of my brother’s grooms?”

The girl laughed. “No. Who is your brother? Hermione keeps telling me to finish reading this book, but it’s our two-month anniversary next week and I’ve been making her a set of bookmarks out of Blibbering Humdinger feathers. Don’t tell her! I want it to be a surprise.”

“I won’t,” Georgiana said, entirely unsure of what she was promising. “My brother is Fitzwilliam Darcy.”

“Oh, the handsome one,” the girl said, and smiled. Perhaps Georgiana should have been offended, but it was a very pretty smile. “I’m Luna.”

“Georgiana,” Georgiana said.

She was considering whether to ring for tea or to invite Luna on a walk through the garden – although Mrs Reynolds might have something to say about Luna’s dress – when there was a slight pop, and a second girl was suddenly standing in the corner of her drawing room.

Now this was too much. One strange girl, Georgiana could manage. With Lizzy’s help, she’d conquered much of her shyness, although she still preferred books to people. But two? And she would have been ready to protest most strongly that this second one, at least, had not entered through a door.

“Hermione!” Luna said, happily. “I knew you’d come and rescue me.”

“I am so sorry,” the new girl told Georgiana, sounding sincere. Her clothing was even more outlandish, a long black academic robe – but surely only men went to university?

“I’m told that Seamus charms wings off Wrackspurts,” Georgiana said, bewildered, hoping she’d got it right.

The new girl stared at her for a moment, then smiled. “Luna,” she said, “you’re a menace.”

“You love me anyway,” Luna said, comfortably, standing and leaning up to kiss her quickly. “Now take me home, we’ll get kebabs for dinner.” She turned to wave at Georgiana. “Goodbye! I’ll see you next month, if Seamus hasn’t got the whole schedule pushed back, or us moved to a different book. I hope he hasn’t. I like you.”

“I like you too,” Georgiana said, aware that her eyes were still as wide as Mrs Reynolds’s dinner plates.
After the girls had vanished, Georgiana sat for a long time at her pianoforte, just letting her fingers rest on the keys. Then, with the softest little smile on her face, she went to write a letter to Kitty.

*Dear Kitty,*

*The strangest thing happened today. I think you should persuade your mamma to let you come and visit…*

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