

11/19/2021 Prompt: Gather (Owen & Karina 13)

-OWEN-

"Where's the castle?" I rubbed my throbbing temples. "All I see is a lake."

"Open your eyes, Owen," Kili said.

"They are open!"

The moth fluttered to my nose. I held back a sneeze.

"It should've worked."

My nose twitched. "What?"

"Are you in love with Karina?"

I answered with ease. "No. She's a friend, nothing more."

"Look again."

Uncrossing my eyes, I peered over the brackish water, for the first time sensing a structure.

"Something's out there. I feel it."

"Good. Use that to find the drawbridge."

"Like the Force?" I joked.

"Pretty much."

Closing my eyes, I swept the lake. A formidable chateau took shape, filling the recesses of my mind. Kili tapped my nose.

"There's my boy. Let's go."

We crossed the drawbridge and entered the castle. Not until later did I question how Kili was familiar with the Force.

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-KARINA-

"Is this Castle Evertrue?" I asked Quin, eyeing the stagnant moat carpeted by bronze leaves. "How do we get across?"

"Should be a drawbridge."

"I don't see...one. What's going on?" An unseen force gathered the leaves layer upon layer, forming a bridge. "I'm not crossing that."

"Nor I."

"Ye of little faith," came a whisper. "Trust me."

My chest ached with unfamiliar longing. By her squint, Quin hadn't heard the voice. I set one foot on the bridge. Then two.

Don't look down.

"Come on, Quin."

The water below glistened like onyx. A ripple broke the surface. Then another.

"Something's down there, Karina."

"We're almost over."

Splash! She was dunked as I flailed from the bridge like a fallen leaf. Right before I hit the water, I heard the voice.

"Gather."

The leaves deposited us between the portcullises, soaked but alive.

"Well," I said, holding out my hand to Quin. "Shall we go in?"

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TAG

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