

It had been a few days since she'd met that Stelciar. feeling drawn towards the lighthouse as she thought about how...comfortable she felt. It had been a long moment since she'd felt so comfortable in her own fur. They talked, and they talked about anything. It was refreshing.

They talked about the sea, the stars, the sky, what they were, what they were made for. All of it. Her own purpose, she assumed, was skewed. She was...misshapen Blight, rot and decay eating away at her spirit. The coils of thorns tightening around her neck and tail as she thought about it. The shadowy grasp just barely out of her paw's reach twitching, as if it would turn and attack her at any moment, the music box that was clasped in one creaked as it was held tighter.

It was terrifying.

She pushed the thoughts aside as best as she could. Tentatively walking back up the path she'd gone nights before. Pawsteps gentle, yet excited. She could barely contain how she'd felt. How...*happy* she felt just thinking about the conversation they could have once more. The topics. The scent of the sea and the gentle lull of the breeze.

She paused at the front of the door. Anxiety felt as though it was a hundred pounds, it felt as though she'd get pushed into the hard earth beneath her. Amazed that the world beneath hadn't started cracking. Was there no weight? Why was the grass not getting smushed, why were the rocks staying where they were?

Asteria stood there, shaking. It felt as though she couldn't breathe, the music box slowly beginning to slip from her shadowy grasp when, suddenly. The door opened. Her head shooting up. Black, syrupy tears pouring down freely. When had that happened? When had they increased in volume?

But. Her worry, her stress, her anxiety. All of it melted away, the tears slowly began to come to just a gentle trickle. There, at the opened lighthouse door stood Zelune. The veiled Stelciar sucked in a breath, realizing she hadn't had one in...probably a little too long.

"H-hello! I'm." a pause as she swallowed **"I'm sorry. I, um. I wanted to see how you were doing...so."** her gaze shifted down to her paws, the paws in question swiveling into the dirt she stood on. How, did she continue this conversation? Ask to hang out? Say she enjoyed the time they shared?

"I." a pause as she stuttered, breath shaky as she looked anywhere except the halo'd feline in front of her. She couldn't tell what the other was thinking, the expression giving

nothing away. **"I was hoping we could, um W-watch the star's again. I. I brought a music box, I figured it would be nice to listen to while we sit and look."** her paws finding a wonderful pebble to roll around.

A quietness began to hang over their heads, the only thing breaking any form of silence was the crashing of the waves. After what felt like forever, the other stelciar spoke up. ***"I. Wouldn't mind that."***

It felt like something heavy was taken off her chest. As if she could breathe again. A soft smile overtook her features as she stepped aside, allowing the larger feline to lead the way, this was her property after all. As she followed, she finally got to get a decent look at her...friend? (It didn't feel right, that's not the word she wanted to call her.)

Her fur was, fluffy. Soft. The pendant wrapped around her tail shone, reflecting the moon valiantly. The flames that engulfed her front legs and one back leg flickered in rhythm with those that shone with her wings and tail. The coloration was, *breathtaking*. It was a gentle blue with hints of purple, it felt calming, relaxing. She compared it to the sky as the sun began to rise. The quills that fluttered out in the wind also caught her attention.

She was breathtaking, in more ways than one. It made her heart skip a beat. What...an odd thing to think about a friend she'd finally made. She pushed the thoughts to the side. Happily walking up next to the molly once they reached the spot they were at last. Gently resting the music box between them and unclasping the lid.

The music box itself was something she herself would never purchase, but the shopkeep continued to insist that it was perfect once Asteria explained why she wanted to purchase something. It was...odd, to say the least. Either way, once the gentle melody began to play softly over the sound of the waves, she was happy she brought it.

From there, they delved into conversation. What constellation they believed they enjoyed the most, which one they'd spotted first. Creatures in the sea they'd seen. Only stopping to wind up the music box and continue a new conversation. It was. Freeing. She herself hadn't noticed it, but her tears almost came to a full stop while she was talking with Zelune, her cheeks were sore from smiling so much. Giggling when her companion smiled.

She felt...like an entirely new feline.

Before they knew it, the sun had risen. She felt saddened. She didn't want to leave. But she had to. Not yet conquering the stare's she'd get from those noticing her shadowy hands, her thorns. Her Tears. Quietly, she got up and shot the larger feline a smile. A genuine smile. **"I hope. I hope that I can meet you again."** A pause, her gaze steady, eyes not tearing away from Zelune's. **"Tomorrow night?"** A glimmer of hope flickered in her eyes. She wouldn't be able to explain why, not at this moment that is.

Her question was followed up with a gift. Her flickering hands had plucked a flower, small, blue. Neither one of their blues. A softer blue. A Hydrangea. The flower in full bloom, the petals small, soft. Blue with hints of pink near the centermost portion of the flower.

She didn't know how to end the conversation. So, she simply dipped her head, veil fluttering and pooling further on the ground as she did so, and turned, gently making her way down the path. The flower, as well as the music box, gently sitting on the grassy spot they spent the night stargazing.

She couldn't wait until they met again.