

With her deep blue eye resting comfortably between her teeth Akari's head turned upwards towards the sky.

*It's The Long Night tonight, isn't it?*

Her gaze searched the sky until she found the sun some distance from the horizon.

*I've got time.*

She set her sights back to the town ahead, her tail flicking as she began to calmly advance towards it.

As the distance between herself and the town reduced, she could make out some of the decorations that filled the area like the carved pumpkins that filled the streets; each one a different size compared to the last. There also seemed to be some skeletons posed outside of a few places.

When she officially entered the town Akari proceeded to carefully scan the surrounding area, taking in as much of the sights and sounds as she could. There was an atmosphere of excitement and nervousness that hung about in the air and she could hear others express both excitement and horror at what she assumed to be The Long Night.

*Ah, to be able to experience it all again for the first time.*

Her ears twitched as hushed voices from nearby CCCat's caught her attention. She began to carefully listen, tuning in to their conversation. A few words stood out to her, those being "Whick" and "Lantern".

Akari's brow furrowed. *A Whick? Wisps? I need to know more.*

With her tongue curled around her eyeball she peered over at the duo of CCCat's conversing before looking around, taking in the area around her; there was nothing unusual— nothing of note. Just Skire's walking by and some closing up their stores.

*Perhaps further in town?*

And with that she carried on through the street, listening in to any conversations she could overhear but she heard nothing else that was worth noting.

Eventually she came upon a crowd in the distance. Her head tilted slightly at the sight.

*Curious, maybe there's more information there.*

With an exhale she relaxed her shoulders before making her way towards the crowd.

As she got closer she could see others leaving the gathering with lanterns in hand, each one different from the last. Akari's ears perked up as an unfamiliar voice spoke, "the wisps are spawning in increased amounts compared to previous years."

*Is that so?*

“Please help me collect some of the wisps.”

*Help gather wisps? Could be fun, sounds like a good way to hone my skills more too.*

Akari stepped forward and began carefully weaving through the crowd as she made her way to stand before the Whick. Now with them in sight Akari began to take in her appearance. The first thing Akari acknowledged was the exhaustion present upon the Whick’s face and the way her eyes darted to and from others in the crowd, searching for something it seemed. The second thing was the silver staff she held, the bird figure at its top and the lantern within its beak caught her gaze for a few moments.

*Let’s get to it then.*

Akari held her eyeball as she stepped forward, the Whick’s attention turning towards her as she did so, “greetings! Name’s Akari, I heard you were requiring aid with the wisps? I’d love to help.” A warm smile rested across her face as she spoke.

The Whick’s face lit up, “your aid would be more than welcome! I’m Suteo. We just need to capture some wisps— but to do so you’ll need a lantern.” With her staff in hand Suteo motioned to behind her where two tables resided. One table had an assortment of parts consisting of candles, stained glass with varying patterns and some intricate pieces of metal; a skeleton of a lantern presumably. While the other table had entire lanterns pre-made. “We can craft you one or you can purchase one.”

Akari gave a soft hum, “purchasing will work fine.” She stepped forward and began to browse the lanterns. One particular one caught her attention, she reached out to it with her free hand and began to carefully examine it.

The stained glass on the lantern portrayed a traveling Gravent getting caught in a storm before being offered an umbrella from a crook and then the two walking together. “I’ll take this one.”

As the process of exchanging money for the lantern was underway, Suteo seemed to be nodding enthusiastically as she spoke again. “Thank you so much! Please be safe as you capture wisps.”

With the lantern in hand Akari nods, “thank you Suteo.” She offers a smile and a bow before setting off.