

Darios's Perspective of Ali Crying

from The Three B's of Genie Whispering Episode 2 Chapter 7

By Nicole Eatough

Darios stood unnoticed in a corner of the kitchen as Tavor and their master returned from yet another training session. Everyone streamed from their gems and scattered upon arrival, as though they couldn't stand to look at each other. Though Garan paused for a moment, looking as though he wanted to speak to their master before he trailed off down a hallway.

Darios smirked. It appeared Tavor had been a fool with his high hopes for the genie whisperer. She was too incompetent to accomplish whatever he wanted. Though, the tiniest part of Darios admitted Tavor probably had unrealistic expectations. The human hadn't grown up knowing genies were real, let alone that she was a genie whisperer. Of course she had no idea what she could do or how to wield what little of her power she'd accessed within the Archives.

Internally, Darios rolled his eyes at himself for unintentionally playing into Tavor's deluded beliefs. Darios had no reason to believe the human had only accessed a little of her power within the Archives. Perhaps it was had been the full limit of what she was capable of and only under extreme circumstances. Like when humans miraculously lifted cars off of loved ones.

But that aside, the human was foolish for trying to please Tavor and his ridiculous ideas after Darios already made it clear to her that none of them knew what she could do.

The human went out to the deck in the backyard, looking off toward the setting sun. Silently, Darios followed. Even once he stood there, she didn't sense his presence, instead wrapping her arms around herself and shivering.

He spoke up. "Aw, poor little genie whisperer still hasn't learned how to be a savior

yet?”

She spun around, her shoulders hunching toward her ears at the sight of him. Her back now leaned against the porch railing, as though she was trying to stand as far away from him as possible. She stared at him with too-wide eyes—a look he was accustomed to seeing from humans. Especially those his shadows had gotten up close and personal with. To her credit, she didn’t tremble as much as some others. But she didn’t say anything either.

He tilted his head as he stared at her. “Why haven’t you figured it out yet? You’re supposed to be Tavor’s special hope. His *only* hope. You’re letting everyone down.” He spoke in a falsely sympathetic voice. Mostly because the only reason he could imagine she was following Tavor like a lost chick was because she’d deluded herself into believing his words and thinking she was some kind of hero to the genies. “How could you do that to the genies you claim as friends and family?”

“Shut up!” Her words came out as a shout, nearly a scream. He’d never heard her raise her voice and nearly jumped at the sound. Only unending practice with human outbursts kept him in place. Angry tears fell from her eyes. “Do you know how I helped everyone before? Because we were in danger. Because we were trapped. Because I was *desperate*. So you know what Tavor thinks is a good idea? Putting everyone in danger, putting them in *pain* so I can use my abilities again!”

Darios stilled. He should have seen that coming. If the human couldn’t access her whisperer abilities again, of course Tavor would recreate the original circumstances as much as possible. If it had only been an act of desperation before, Tavor would make her desperate again.

“You claim to care about the others.” She hurled the words almost like an insult, her voice full of challenge. “You called them your companions. Shouldn’t you care about Tavor’s

plans? Or is this just all my fault because I'm the pathetic human who can't do the miraculous genie whisperer magic that none of you even believed in!" She waved her hands wildly as she spoke.

He regarded her in silence for a long time. Whatever damage Tavor caused the others wouldn't be permanent. It wouldn't even last long. Had Tavor explained that to her and she simply didn't get it? Or was she still this upset over the thought of any of the others being harmed?

The deepest, most worthless, and hidden part of him said if this human wanted to be a hero for the genies, it wasn't because she wanted praise and honor from them. It was because she genuinely wanted to save the beings she'd given up her own dreams for. But if that was what she was thinking, it would only last temporarily. Soon praise and honor, or more, would be exactly what she wanted. He wouldn't forget that for one moment.

But her words still bothered him. He couldn't help the others, and they wouldn't experience much pain anyway. But there was something else he could offer. Crossing his arms over his chest, he said, "I haven't made my wish for this week. How about I go after Tavor for you?" A small smile curled the edges of his lips. "Tell Tavor it's another experiment. We're seeing if you can increase my ability to harm another genie through a wish." He thought it was worth testing out.

She closed her eyes, shaking her head as tears still dripped down her face. "How does hurting Tavor make him hurting the others better? It won't stop or change anything." Opening her eyes, she glared at him "And I don't hurt my friends. I don't want *anyone* hurt."

He snorted. "Does that include the dead wizards?" Not that he'd ever cried over a dead wizard, but her sanctimonious attitude grated on him. As though she was so above the corruption

embraced by most of her kind.

“Self-defense is accepted in a court of law,” she shot back without hesitation. “And none of them suffered.”

He watched her in silence, remembering Tavor’s stupid nickname for her. Kittens were weak, and while Darios had very little nice things to say about any human, their master was not weak. He removed all sarcasm and fake sympathy from his voice. “My offer is made in earnest, human. I may find you pathetic, but I don’t like the universal’s tactics either. He isn’t always very careful of those he claims responsibility for if it doesn’t meet his current needs.”

“Do you feel responsible for the others?” She seemed to genuinely want to know the answer. But that was far more personal than he would share with most genies, let alone a human.

After realizing he didn’t plan to answer, she shook her head, edging past him to go back inside. Idly, he wondered if she’d ever cried like that in front of the others before.