

Title: In the dungeon

Author: Seraph

Fandom: TVXQ

Pairing: Kim Jaejoong and Park Yoochun

Rating: PG-13

Genre: AU, crossover, fantasy

Word count: about 1100

Disclaimer: Pure fiction. Never happened. *The Doctrine of Labyrinths*(and places, characters and words mentioned) belongs to Sarah Monette and was used as a pure inspiration for writing this.

Summary: A dream which is not a dream. More like a memory. And a promise.

Author's notes: It's not exactly a crossover more of an AU for both parties involved, but I just had to write this (because I have recently finished "The Corambis" and I can't convey how much I **loved** it. It's brilliant!!) . You don't need to have read the books by Sarah Monette to understand the first part of this fiction, but I certainly recommend that you do! Her *The Doctrine of Labyrinths* is one of the best fantasy series I have read. Check her website www.sarahmonette.com. It's a true treat for any reader.

This story was also inspired by TVXQ recent music video "Break Out". This MV together with my obsession for Monette's books gave life to this piece of fiction.

This piece isn't revised. All misspellings will be corrected later.

Devoted to: To the author of the books that have inspired me to write this, to vermeil because you reply to my every even the smallest comment and it takes a lot of patience to do so :)

In the dungeon

The air in the dungeon was foul, stinking of the worst things imaginable, and also bitterly cold. It was empty, silent but the sound of our footsteps and an irregular rhythm of his cane. But at the same time it felt as if its walls were seeping *mikkary* – they must have soaked up enough of blood and tears and not so silent cries of their involuntary residents.

The dungeon had lived and breathed for hundreds of years on the deaths of its victims.

We moved as slowly as possible through its twisty paths, checking every corner, every suspicious stone under our feet. The green witchlights above my head made shadows pool in strange places, making me twitchy every time we rounded a corner.

And I was twitchy enough as it was.

We were silent for so long that I almost forgot that I wasn't alone, when I suddenly heard a muffled curse behind me. I came to an abrupt stop and turned around.

"What's wrong?"

He blushed. "I'm stuck", he said.

"What exactly do you mean 'I'm stuck'?" I didn't mean to sound so flash, but this place was making me nervous and being stuck here was far from my wishes.

“Dunno,” he said. But I could see that his other hand, that was holding a cane, was curled into a fist. “Like something’s holding me... Somebody”, he corrected himself after a pause. “I ain’t see nothing. But you know,” he gave a tiny shrug. “I ain’t no hocus.”

That really didn’t help my mood much. It took me a moment to take a few deep breaths and force myself to look for a noirant power. For hours that we spent investigating this place I denied myself this ability to see, because when I looked it was all around me, crawling to me, threatening to choke me, swallow me alive...

My control was slipping and I knew it as well as I knew that if I lost this battle now we would be *really* stuck here.

Finally I made myself look at him. Now I could see two ghostly hands that were holding him by the forearm of one hand and by the tail of his coat. The hands looked grey and pale and were coming from the walls like brunches of an ugly tree. And what was even worse was the fact that there were more of them slowly appearing through the walls and reaching out for him. I knew that he would probably be able to break away, but what good was to make the dungeon hostile. It wasn’t so yet, as far as I could tell. Only curious, like a wild animal that had never seen a human before. But its curiosity was a deadly one. If we spooked whatever lived in these walls strong enough, it would kill us.

And that would be my fault. As always.

Curiosity killed the cat, he would say, arching his eyebrow at me.

Laughter bubbled at the bottom of my throat, threatening to escape in a full fit of hysterics.

“Um...”, he giving me with a funny look, as if he couldn’t decide whether attracting my attention to himself was a good or bad idea.

I knew what I had to do. This place, no matter how scared made me, respected me as a wizard. So when I came up to him, the hands that were holding him shied away from my presence.

I held out my own hand to him, my golden rings shined dully in the witchlights.

“Take my hand,” I said, “They won’t bother you anymore.” I kept my voice as neutral as possible.

His green eyes flickered up at me through the tangled mess of his red hair. When he realized that I wasn’t mocking him or taunting him, he let out a small sigh and his scarred calloused hand gripped mine firmly.

I knew the moment when he felt the ghostly hands release him. He blinked and did a double take, looking around him to make sure that nothing was restraining his movements. As if he could see them in the first place.

Then he was looking up at me again, his almost not a smile lighting up his face and making my breath hitch. ‘I don’t deserve this’, I thought. ‘I don’t deserve his love or his loyalty.’ I didn’t need the binding by forms - never needed it in fact - to tell me that he would follow me to the end of the world and back *twice* if I simply asked him. He would follow me everywhere without saying a word. Or rather curse and call me a halfwit fuck but he would follow me regardless.

And that was what he was doing now. Following me through the dungeon because *I* had wanted to investigate and *I* thought that it would be such a marvelous idea. And I couldn’t really phantom why he

hadn't abandoned me in these curvy corridors, because I would have done it in his place. And it wasn't as if I could find my way *anywhere* without it him.

He was frowning and I realized that I hadn't said or moved since he had clasped my hand. I could feel my face heating, so I turned around and marched forward as if I owned the place.

I could feel his amusement radiating behind me, and he gripped my hand more firmly as he fell into a pace with me.

It was all the reassurance I needed.

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I could feel a hand slowly stroking my hair. I opened my eyes, blinking into the darkness and for some moment so disoriented that I couldn't call my witchlights to life.

My... what?

The traces of a strange dream lingered in my mind, making me even more confused. There was a rustle and then a lamp flickered into life.

Jaejoong sat on my bed. He wore yesterday's clothes and looked as if he hadn't slept. The tightness around his eyes and a distant look told me as much. He was tired, but also looked worried.

"Bad dream?" he asked.

I shrugged. It was hard to answer the question. It was a weird dream. A dream that felt more real than Jaejoong sitting right beside me. A dream that made me feel miserable, guilty, embarrassed and at the same time so damn happy that it simply didn't make any sense.

I was still struggling with my words, when Jaejoong smiled this gently, only for him, sort of smile and said, "I know how to ward your dreams."

Before I could remember why this phrase sounded so *familiar* and at the same time so *wrong* coming from him, Jaejoong was leaning down to me, pressing his lips to mine.

Kissing me.

And it felt both familiar and so strange that I couldn't help saying, "You could dye your hair red, you know." And his laughter ghosted over my lips, but then he kissed me again and everything ceased to matter.

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23 January, 2010