

Of the Stars in the Sky

by Gelsey

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Chapter 1 of 1

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Regulus Black was out after curfew. If he didn't have a good reason, he would be appalled at himself. He was proud of the fact that he was nothing like his trouble-making older brother, Sirius, whose constant disregard for the rules Regulus held in poor taste.

It wasn't the actual breaking of the rules he disliked, as how Sirius was stupid enough to get caught.

He climbed the stairs of the Astronomy Tower, the *Silencio* he'd put on his boots continuing to hold. The door opened soundlessly and he slipped inside.

A telescope, more expensive and better cared for than any of the student telescopes, was set up at the window. It wasn't the telescope that made his breath catch; however, it was the woman who sat on the ugly but functional stool covered in brown corduroy who held his undivided attention.

The stool might be an oddity particular to the current Astronomy teacher, whose hair was too long and bead-filled to be normal, but this woman was a priceless treasure. Her skin was as dark as the Dark Arts he dabbled in, as dark as the deepest night sky. She seemed to absorb the starlight and radiate it back with unconscious, sensuous temptation.

Though he'd entered silently, her head turned, the silky purple turban (from her homeland, she said) setting off her complexion to perfection. Full lips tilted up in a smile that faintly crinkled the corners of her dark, slanted eyes.

Lilith Zabini was the most beautiful star he'd ever beheld in his life, and like a planet held in orbit around a sun, he felt a visceral, instinctive pull towards her.

"Regulus," the Astronomy assistant said, holding out a hand to him. He took it, raising it to his lips and gently kissing it, ever the pureblood gentleman.

Her skin was too dark to show her blush, but he could tell she was pleased. "What secrets are the stars whispering to you tonight, my love?" he asked, his voice low and smooth. He'd learned from years of listening to Severus, who had finished last year, a year ahead of Regulus.

"That you would be coming for me tonight," she said, her voice as dark as her skin, wrapping around his senses with drugged warmth.

He pulled her closer, her spicy, familiar scent settling around him comfortably. "They were right." His lips were a hairsbreadth from hers, his eyes heavy-lidded and dilated as if he had just gotten a fix from the best drug on the market.

The moment stretched on, and he felt strung out with wanting her, his desire for this woman greater than even the one he held for the Dark Mark.

"Marry me," he whispered. "Next month, after I graduate, will you marry me?" All eloquence deserted him, leaving him with only the deepest sincerity and love that could fill the endless sky with stars.

A falling star, tail flashing red in the night sky, went unnoticed in the wake of her fervent yes.

A/N: One possible prequel to Black Widow. Written for a challenge the LJ group Romancing the Wizard.