

Biology

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Warnings: elves

Summary: When you're an elf living in the human world things can be problematic at times and Yu has a bit of an embarrassing predicament which makes life a little difficult for a while.

Author's Notes: Okay, so this is Laura's fault, she found a concert review that said "They looked as dainty as a pack of elves onstage" and then said she wanted elf fic, so here it is :). When I started it I thought it was going to end up elf porn, but seems I was wrong ::g::: Thanks to Soph for the beta. Written for Fluff Friday 25th Sept 2009.

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They were running late, not a new phenomenon, but one that always caused Kiro stress. He did not like having to rush.

"Strify," he said as his friend dashed past him towards the front door.

"What?" the singer asked, turning and looking at him questioningly.

"Ears," he said and nodded his head towards the mirror in the hallway.

Strify looked at himself.

"Oh shit," was the annoyed realisation as Strify tucked his hair behind one ear and examined his reflection.

Admittedly Strify looked even more adorable than usual with the little points on his ears, but if anyone outside the house saw them they would raise all sorts of questions. Being Cinema Bizarre they could always claim they were a statement of individuality, but then they'd have to explain how they were done and who did them and that would be far too complicated. Kiro stood there with his hands on his hips and waited as Strify stared at himself in the mirror, narrowed his eyes and concentrated. It only took a few moments for the little pointed tips to shrink into neatly rounded ears and then Kiro set his mind to his next task.

Getting the whole band out of the door at the same time was like trying to get sense out of a water nymph; nigh on impossible. It was moments like these he wondered why he had ever thought the human world would be fun. It was noisy, dirty, frenetic and full of pushy humans and with a sigh he turned to find out where the hell Yu and Romeo were, Shin he knew was in the living room watching cartoons on their TV. Why he was the only one that managed to remember about time he would never know.

They were all just coming into their seventies, a time of life where young elves were supposed to go off and do exciting and crazy things, but sometimes it seemed a little too crazy to Kiro. At least he was slowly adjusting to the speed of

everything here and he wasn't so completely tired all the time, but it was still exhausting. It wasn't that he didn't enjoy making music, he did, and the attention was fun, but he missed the tranquillity of the trees of his home.

"Shin, we're almost ready to go," he called into the living room as he walked past the door to go and find Yu and Romeo.

He knew Shin missed the quiet of home sometimes as well, it was why Shin had chosen to live alone so he had a chance to just be quiet sometimes. Of course Shin was often around their place as well, because elves were very much social creatures.

Kiro frowned when he found Romeo standing outside the bathroom door glaring at it.

"You're supposed to be ready to go," Kiro said, taking in his friend's half dressed state.

"If I can ever get in the bathroom I'll be ready," Romeo said, clearly annoyed. "Yu's been in there for half an hour and I can't get him out."

That didn't sound like Yu. Having a father who was a deep forest elf, Yu had sudden moments of shyness, but that usually meant hiding behind his hair, not locking himself in the bathroom. Yu took after his mother much more than his father, and she was a tree elf like Kiro, Strify and Shin. The only time his father's traits really came out were with Yu's need to clean and the fact that he was intolerant to a lot of human foods; deep forest elves were fastidious about their environment and what they ate.

Kiro knocked on the bathroom door and put his ear to it when there was no immediate reply.

"Yu, are you okay in there?" he asked.

There was a muffled reply, but nothing that made much sense.

"Yu, we're getting worried out here," he tried again, "if you don't say something sensible I'm opening the door."

Normal locks were not an issue when a person had magic.

"I tried opening the door," Romeo said as Kiro listened for a reply, "but he stopped me."

They all had the power of glamour and the ability to do certain enchantments, but with Romeo being a plains elf, his strengths were different to the rest of them. If you wanted to help something grow you asked a plains elf, if you wanted complicated abstract magic you asked a tree elf.

"Yu," Kiro said, not hearing a sensible reply, "you have ten seconds before I open this door."

He was beginning to get a little worried.

"Go without me," came the finally, coherent response.

"Not likely," was Kiro's immediate reply. "What's wrong?"

Yu was not prone to erratic behaviour; that was usually Strify's area of expertise, so Kiro wanted to know what was going on.

"Just go away," Yu said, sounding a little desperate.

"No," he replied, "we're worried about you."

It wasn't likely that one of them would flip out, not after so much time, but it always paid to be careful. After the trouble Luminor had had, they never took anything for granted. Luminor had been one of the ring leaders for their assault on the human music industry, but he just hadn't been able to take the human world. When they had first arrived they had all thought that Kiro would be the one going back if anyone did, what with his inability to stay awake half the time, but in the end it had been Luminor who had suffered. Their friend kept coming back, but he just couldn't stay away from home for long enough to be part of the game they were playing.

"Yu," Kiro deepened his voice to show he was serious.

The lock on the bathroom door clicked open and then the handle turned. Kiro pushed it gently and it swung back to reveal a very embarrassed looking Yu. It took Kiro a second or so to realise what he was seeing and then it became all too clear why Yu had locked himself in the bathroom. All down Yu's left side were markings, small green, organic looking markings and Kiro did his very best not to smile.

"Oh," he said, manfully attempting to keep a straight face, "what's her name?"

"Don't laugh at me," Yu said and tried to close the door again, but Kiro had his foot against it.

What Yu was displaying so beautifully were mating colours, only none of them were old enough to be thinking about children and it definitely wasn't mating season. It was kind of the equivalent of a teenage boy having an inappropriate erection and it could have happened to any of them, but that still didn't stop it being funny. Unlike an unfortunate erection, however, mating colours could take anything from an hour to a whole day to disappear and since Yu's were still bright green it didn't look like the hour option was likely.

"What's the holdup?" came from down the corridor and Kiro turned to see Strify heading their way.

Kiro stepped aside a little so that Strify would have a clear view of Yu in the bathroom doorway. Strify stopped dead and then smiled just a little.

"Oh, Yu," Strify said, batting his eyelashes, "I didn't know you cared."

"Arseholes," was Yu's very loud verdict on that and then Kiro found himself being pushed out of the way as Yu stomped back to his room.

Kiro couldn't help it, he laughed; the markings went all the way down Yu's left side from head to toe. Yu really had it bad. Romeo managed to keep it down to a smile rather than a laugh, but Strify didn't even try.

"I'll just go and make sure he doesn't tidy our room into oblivion," Romeo said, fighting down the grin on his face and Kiro gave him points for trying.

It was one of those things that just happened occasionally and Yu was probably dying of embarrassment, but Kiro couldn't help finding it hilarious. It did, however, complicate things.

"I don't think that's going away any time soon," he said, sobering a little as Strify walked up beside him.

"Nope," Strify agreed with a nod, but still grinning.

"And we can't play a set without our lead guitarist," he added, since they had been on their way to record a performance for one of the daytime shows.

It wasn't supposed to go out until the next week, so it wasn't a major panic, but it wasn't great.

"And we really shouldn't leave him here like that alone," Strify said, backing up what Kiro was thinking.

At home mating colours would not have been a problem, just a bit of a joke, but it was possible that if they left Yu by himself while he was like that in the human world his magic might react badly. It was, after all, part of elven mating and even if it wasn't real they really didn't want Yu wandering off because his magic was looking for other elves.

"Flu?" Kiro suggested.

"Food poisoning," Strify countered and Kiro could tell that was the decision. "You tell Shin, I'll get on the phone and make sure we can reschedule the recording."

That was that; their day re-planned.

On his way back from talking to Shin to check on Yu and Romeo, Kiro heard Strify on the phone and it seemed Strify had resorted to being graphic.

"No it's not an allergy," Strify was saying from inside his room; "Yu has his head down the toilet, and Kiro looks green and Shin is lying on the sofa moaning into a bowl. It was definitely the Chinese we had last night. Sort it out for tomorrow."

Kiro stopped listening at that point; Strify was more than capable of making sure everything played out the way they wanted to. He knocked on Yu and Romeo's door and then went in when Romeo called out 'Enter'. Yu was sitting on the bed, knees up under his chin, looking put out and still embarrassed.

"Just so you know," Kiro said, feeling just a little sorry for his friend, "we all have food poisoning. Strify's getting them to reschedule the recording for tomorrow."

Yu looked even more embarrassed at that.

"Strify's going to kill me isn't he?" Yu said, sounding mournful.

"Don't be ridiculous," Kiro said and shook his head, "I think he's looking forward to the day off. It could have happened to any of us, Yu, so stop worrying. If you two get ready I will attempt to produce some breakfast rather than whatever we would have got on the way."

The surprise was evident on Yu's face.

"Ten minutes," Kiro said, without waiting for either of the others to reply, "or it'll be burnt."

With that he walked out and headed to see what they had in the fridge.

In the end he threw together a hearty breakfast omelette and let the good smells bring everyone to the kitchen. Unlike his usual sleeveless low-necked tops, Yu was wearing a roll neck with long sleeves that he had clearly borrowed off Romeo and Kiro politely ignored how uncomfortable his friend still was. Strify was not so tactful when he walked in.

"Yu, you covered up the pretty patterns," was what the singer said and Kiro was sure Strify would have been pelted with egg had he put the omelette in front of Yu by that point.

It would have been annoying except Strify always accepted being made fun of with good humour when it was his turn to be the butt of the jokes.

"Leave him alone," Kiro scolded in his best motherly tone and began dishing up.

"Happened to me once," Shin said, taking his place at the table, "right before I was supposed to go to a family gathering. My mother wouldn't let me leave my room."

It was rather an embarrassing thing to admit to, but Shin didn't look as if it bothered him in the slightest. It was typical of their sometimes mysterious drummer really.

"I don't know why she didn't let me go," Shin continued as he accepted a plate from Kiro, "it would at least have given them something to talk about. My family is so boring."

That made everyone except Yu smile at least and Yu looked a little less tense.

"Yeah, me too," Kiro decided to jump in, since he didn't want Yu feeling embarrassed all day, "well not the family gathering bit, but it did happen once. My dad was so pleased, after I turned out not to be the warrior type I am sure he thought I was going to turn out to be an asexual."

He smiled fondly at the memory of his father. Most of the males of his family were warriors and his father had been killed in battle nearly twenty years previously, but he carried his parent in his heart nonetheless. When Kiro had turned out to take after his mother and not his father it hadn't been a problem, but his dad had wanted lots of grandchildren eventually and so when he'd finally shown his true colours, as it were, his father had been incredibly pleased. Asexuals were elves whose mating drives never kicked in and there was no stigma attached, in fact they often became great thinkers within the community, but his dad had loved big families. It made him a little sad to think his father would never see any of his grandchildren when they eventually arrived.

"Count yourself lucky," Romeo said in a very conversational tone, "if it happens to me bits of my hair turn into grass, and that itches like hell."

For the first time Yu cracked a smile and Kiro laughed out loud; sometimes elf physiology was just plain weird. He looked at Strify who just raised an eyebrow at him, so he kept looking and was rewarded with a put upon sigh.

"Okay," Strify said with his usual flare for drama, "it's happened to me too. I was completely smitten by my history master a few years ago and there, right in the middle of him trying to teach me the difference between the Dwarf Uprising in the Year of Steel and the Dwarf Uprising in the Year of Diamond, poof, I'm covered in little green swirls. Never did find out why those blasted dwarves were revolting."

Strify's delivery was perfect and Yu actually laughed. Kiro thought that maybe they could get through the day without too much awkwardness.

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The morning was fun; they played video games and watched some DVDs and had a good time, although Yu's unfortunate markings showed no sign of fading by lunch time. After a light lunch Kiro decided to go and have a nap. It was the lack of magic in the environment that made him enjoy sleep so much and he took the opportunity whenever he could. He had adjusted quite a bit and finding the right food and things like that had helped, but he still liked to replenish his energy reserves when possible.

What woke him from his peaceful doze was the sensation of a hand on his thigh and he blinked sleepily to find that Yu was leaning over him.

"Hi," he said, brain unwilling to let go of sleep completely, "what's up?"

"You smell really good," was what Yu replied and the hand on his thigh moved a little higher, at which point Kiro's brain came fully online.

"Um," he said, trying to sit up and being pushed gently back onto the bed by Yu's other hand.

Then Yu leant close to him and breathed in deeply and Kiro knew something was definitely not right.

"So very good," Yu said and smiled.

Kiro grabbed Yu's wrist before the hand on his thigh could move again.

"Yu," he said as firmly as he could, "you like girls."

He had heard rumours of a reaction like Yu seemed to be having, but he had thought they were just talk. Yu was acting like he really was under the influence of the mating drive, but that just wasn't possible; there were too many factors not in place including the fact that it only worked when both parties were under the influence. If Kiro remembered right it was something to do with humans and pheromones and the fact that humans had sex for pleasure and sex for reproduction all muddled up. Elves liked sex as much as the next sentient species, but mating to produce offspring and sex for fun or taking a relationship to the next level were very different things.

The mating drive was primal, it drew together those who were compatible and would produce the strongest offspring. It was such an encompassing force that it could turn male into female and vice versa for the duration if the attraction was strong enough. Couples with children stayed together as a family, but other than when the mating drive took them it wasn't always their husband or wife that individuals had an ongoing sexual relationship with. It made elven families very much extended and interlocking and often confusing to outsiders.

Yu seemed to be confused, somewhere between the mating drive and looking for some sexual relief and Kiro was trying very hard to work out how to wriggle out of this situation. If there was one thing Kiro knew it was that Yu was straight, because there had been a drunken fumble one night that had left them both mortified in the morning and they had mutually decided to never mention it again. The fact that Yu was big and strong and muscled and handsome was very much not lost on Kiro and he wouldn't have minded this being real, but he wasn't about to take advantage of his friend's state.

His resolve almost broke when Yu leant in closer and nuzzled his neck, kissing gently the sensitive skin there, but he just about managed to drag his mind back on track.

"Strify, help!" he yelled, not that it seemed to bother Yu in the slightest.

In fact the hand that Kiro did not have in a vice like grip was wandering over his chest and it felt so very good. By the time the door to his room opened he wasn't sure if he really wanted to be rescued.

"What the hell?" was Strify's take on the situation.

That forced his brain back into action and he glared at his friend.

"Well, help," he said as Yu completely ignored that there was someone else in the room.

"Are you sure you need it?" Strify asked in a very unhelpful way.

"Yes, he's not in his right mind," Kiro replied, somewhat exasperated, but at least that kept his mind off sex, "now can you help me get him off of me?"

Strify just stood there for a moment and Kiro begged for deliverance, because what Yu had just decided to do with his tongue was really turning him on. In the end Strify put his arm out, touched Yu's back, Kiro felt magic flow and precisely nothing happened.

"Well?" Kiro asked, more to distract himself than anything.

"I tried to put him to sleep," Strify said, looking perplexed; "it didn't work. Maybe both of us?"

Kiro didn't have any better ideas so he nodded and held out the hand that wasn't currently stopping Yu from molesting him. Strify took it and when Kiro felt his friend's magic moving he added his own to it. In next to no time Kiro found himself being squashed as Yu ended up lying on him.

"Ugh," was his response to that as breathing became optional.

Luckily for him Strify was on the ball and helped him roll Yu onto the other side of the bed. This then revealed the next problem, Yu seemed to be mostly asleep, but not quite and the moment Kiro tried to move away he was grabbed and then Yu was snuggling into his side. Only then did Yu settle and seemingly go to sleep properly and Kiro was basically stuck. Strify just grinned at him when he tried to move and couldn't.

"Looks like you might as well give up," Strify said in a very unhelpful way; "Yu wants you for a snuggle buddy and I don't think you're getting away."

"You could help," Kiro complained, but gave up struggling.

"But you're so cute together," Strify said and did a beautiful impression of a teenage girl.

Kiro just rolled his eyes.

"If he molests me in my sleep I'm blaming you," was his only comeback, but he was already beginning to feel sleepy again and Yu was really lovely and warm.

Strify gave him a worryingly thoughtful look before smiling brightly again and turning around.

"If he does, just go with it," was Strify's parting advice.

It didn't take him long to fall asleep again and he had very pleasant dreams that left him feeling warm and happy and drifted away when he finally woke. This time it was movement that woke him and he opened his eyes to find Yu sitting up.

"Oh god," Yu said, memory clearly returning, "I'm so sorry."

The mating colours were almost gone from Yu's skin and it was very clear he was back to his old self.

"Don't worry about it," Kiro said, sitting up as well and patting his friend on the arm, "no harm done and I haven't slept that soundly in ages."

Yu still looked very worried and so Kiro decided to just go with the flow.

"Are you hungry?" he asked, swinging his legs off the bed and standing up. "I'm hungry; let's go see if anyone has thought about dinner."

And that was it; he refused to make an issue out of something that was no one's fault. Strify would be far better at making a joke out of the whole thing that made them all smile than he would and then they'd be able to get everything back to normal. Smiling at Yu and trying to forget the tingly feeling running through his nerves where Yu had been touching him as they slept, he walked towards the door; it was time to face the world.

The jokes did come thick and fast, but it was the best way to clear the air and by the time dinner was done Kiro had almost stopped thinking about it. That was until Strify caught him over the washing up.

"I've been thinking," his friend said as they washed the glasses they'd been using.

"What about?" Kiro asked, trying to get Strify's lip gloss off the rim of the glass he was washing.

"You and Yu," Strify replied, which probably would have sounded like gibberish to anyone not familiar with them.

That made Kiro turn and look.

"What about me and Yu?" he asked, not sure where Strify was going with this conversation.

"Well, I've been going over things in my head," Strify told him, squeaking the tea towel over one of the already washed glasses, "and have you ever wondered if you two might be, y'know, compatible?"

Kiro frowned, he wasn't quite sure what Strify was suggesting.

"What makes you say that?" he asked, genuinely interested in his friend's thought processes.

"Well there was that time when you were both drunk," Strify began.

"How did you know about that?" Kiro asked, since he had been almost sure he and Yu had managed to pretend to everyone else that that had been nothing more than falling asleep pissed out of their heads.

Strify gave him a hard look for that question.

"Do not embarrass yourself by asking that again," Strify said and then carried on. "Back to the point: on top of that when Yu's under the influence of mating colours he comes after you. I'm just wondering if maybe, in thirty years or so, you might find yourselves chasing each other naked through the trees."

Kiro had never thought about that possibility; it wasn't completely ridiculous either. There were often signs between couples who were likely to end up together in that way, but it had never occurred to him. The idea made him smile. He and Yu were unlikely to ever end up in a regular relationship because of the simple fact that he was the wrong sex to attract Yu, but that didn't preclude the possibility that they might end up family anyway. The thought of having little Yu/Kiro crosses running around appealed to him, even if it did mean that he would have to sample the joys of being female for a while to have them (he was under no illusions about who would end up the woman if necessary, Yu had the masculine thing completely down).

"Well no need to ask if you like the idea," Strify said, nudging him on the arm and grinning.

"So what if I do?" Kiro challenged as he ran the prospect around in his head. "You're the one that suggested it."

"Just using my eyes," Strify replied, but seemed taken with the thought as well.

The idea of children might be thirty or forty years down the road, but it appealed to Kiro. It might not happen, but the possibility made him feel warm inside and he went back to scrubbing the glass in his hand with a huge smile on his face.

The End