

The Legend of Sir Darkhan of Wind and Earth

Long ago in the year 1334 in a small house in the English countryside, a boy was born. This boy had brown eyes that seemed to shift like the wind was contained in them. He had black hair and white skin. He was thick yet thin. Everything about him seemed to scream contrast yet unity. The boy would be Sir Darkhan of wind and earth, one of the greatest lords to ever live, but at the moment his parents named him Elijah. He grew up peacefully in the countryside living the life of a peasant, and as he grew up people began to notice he had incredible strength yet he was also quick and nimble. He was a perfect child, always helping everybody he came across, and as he grew older, he noticed that he felt a connection to the earth and wind which added power to his every movement. Without him noticing he became more like the earth and wind, solid and free. He lived a peaceful life in that tiny village, but it couldn't last, in the southeast France was preparing to attack England and the king gave the order to recruit every able-bodied man in England for the war effort. Elijah was 12 when he was recruited to attend knights academy. As they rode, the knight asked "If you want to be a knight you need a new name.". Elijah considered that and said "Darkhan." The knight looked at him and said "Wind blows over the plains, I like it." And so began the legend of Darkhan.

When he arrived at knight's academy he first went to the plain white barracks to get his equipment and find where his room was. As he exited the barracks he saw a thin boy with blonde hair and bright blue eyes being cornered by a group of older kids, they were trying to get the boy to give up his money but the boy stubbornly refused. Just before it got violent Darkhan stepped in and said "leave him alone". The leader of the older kids laughed and said "Why should we". "Because it is not the way of the knight to bully those weaker than you". Darkhan said firmly.

The boys seemed to consider it looking between Darkhan and the blonde boy. Finally, the leader said, "You're right but I want to know what makes you think you can talk to me like that".

Darkhan looked confused and said, "who are you". The leader puffed his chest out and declared "I am Charles the third and I challenge you to a duel in one month's time". "Okay, I accept"

Darkhan said without hesitation. "See you in a month" Charles said while walking away.

Darkhan watched them leave and then turned to the blonde boy and said, "What's your name?".

"James," the boy said, "what's yours". "Darkhan" he said. "Hey I think we are roommates"

James said, then he seemed to hesitate before saying "do you want to be friends". "Well we're roommates so it doesn't make sense to not be friends" Darkhan said. "Right you are," James said as they walked laughing to their room. The next month was filled with tough training in the sword and hard exercises, but every night Darkhan and James would hang out together and they soon became good friends. Finally, the day of the duel came and Darkhan got up feeling nervous.

As he walked to the arena he thought to himself *what is I'm not good enough, I've only been here for one month, what if I don't win* but then the wind gently brushed his face and it seemed to say "breathe" the earth rumbled as to say "be strong" and that calmed him down as he walked to the arena full of confidence. Finally, he arrived at the plain dirt-covered arena and the crowd parted to let him pass, he stepped in front of the surprised-looking Charles. "You actually showed up, " said Charles, sounding surprised. "Why wouldn't I" calmly replied Darkhan. "Because I'm a third-year and you just showed up" scoffed Charles "but anyway let's start" he said motioning to a boy with a flag. The boy with the flag nodded and said "Draw your weapons". Charles and Darkhan drew their padded weapons as the boy with the flag shouted "start" and the fight began. Darkhan charged at Charles and attacked with all he had but the older boy defended well even though he seemed surprised at Darkhan's speed and strength. "You can't beat me" Charles

taunted. “We will see” Darkhan muttered. Darkhan charged again but this time differently, he felt the rage of the wind and earth at the bully and charged in accordance to it. The spectators saw Darkhan suddenly double in speed as he launched a skillful barrage of attacks at Charles. This time Charles stood no chance and he was forced out of the ring. He looked at Darkhan and said, “How did you do that,” but Darkhan, still in sync with the wind and earth, didn't answer and wandered off. He thought to himself as he walked *why are the wind and earth angry with Charles... unless* he thought about all the times he felt the wind and earth mirroring his emotions *the wind and earth are just reflecting my heart*. “No that’s just a silly thought” he said out loud but he couldn’t shake the idea he was right.

The following two years were filled with hard training in combat, strategy, and leadership. Darkhan and James did everything together except for one thing: Every night after training Darkhan would go and walk in the forest just being in sync with the wind and earth and as he did this he became much stronger and faster and became even more like the wind and earth. One day he was walking through the sea of towering trees like normal when he heard a scream, he didn’t hesitate and ran faster than he ever had before towards the voice. He saw a young girl his age being attacked by a bear, without hesitation punched it subconsciously adding the wind and earth to the blow. The wind howled and the earth shattered as the bear was sent flying back, killed in a single blow. The girl looked at him in shock and asked, “How did you do that”. He was also shocked and he looked at his fist and thought *maybe the wind and earth do reflect my heart, when I heard that scream I just wanted to save that person and the wind and earth gave me the strength to do that*. “Hello you there, how did you do that?” the girl said again. “Oh I don’t really know” Darkhan said absentmindedly “Oh, are you okay?” “I’m fine, but more importantly how did you do that” she pressed. Darkhan chuckled nervously “I really don’t

know”. The girl squinted at him then said “Fine, I’m Rebecca, and thank you for saving me”. “Oh, umm, you’re welcome?” Darkhan mumbled. She rolled her eyes and asked, “Wanna walk with me?” Darkhan was suddenly aware of how beautiful the girl was with thick black hair, fair white skin, and vibrant green eyes. “Um I don’t know?” he awkwardly stuttered. Rebecca smiled and said “Come on I don’t bite” and grabbed his arm “This way”. Darkhan walked with the girl and chatted with her; he didn’t know why but he felt connected to her. Finally, it was getting really late and the girl said “I have to go Darkhan can we meet here tomorrow night” “sure Rebecca” Darkhan said. She gave him a brilliant smile and said “Oh and call me Becca, see you tomorrow”. After that, he would walk with Becca and the wind and earth every night and would train and eat with James and every day.

For four years he trained like this and as he got better at fighting and became closer to Becca and James he felt more connected to the wind and earth., He had realized that the wind and earth were a reflection of his heart so the more he understood himself the more connected to these elements. . Now was the time for the final combat examinations but because of the war, it was announced the combat examinations would consist of getting some field experience against the french. James and Darkhan were included in the same examination group so they set out together. Over the course of a month, they had four battles but James and Darkhan were at the back and never really did anything. Finally, it was time to head back and Darkhan was really excited to see Becca again because it had been a month since he last saw her. Suddenly they were ambushed in the back, where James and Darkhan were, and James cried out for help as he was surrounded. When Darkhan heard that cry he forgot everything and jumped down from his horse and drew his sword. He felt the greatest connection to the wind and earth he’d ever felt before as everything he was bent toward protecting James. His body blurred and he appeared

next to James and a second later the six people surrounding him turned into bloody chunks. With James saved Darkhan's singular sense of purpose faded as he looked at the people he killed, he leaned over and vomited on the ground, "Darkhan are you okay?" James inquired worriedly. "I'm fine" Darkhan muttered. "How did you do that, you moved so fast I couldn't see you" "I don't know, I don't know" Darkhan whispered. James looked at him worriedly but left the subject as they both turned to watch the bloody battle. The French were outnumbered but they fought like madmen to try and take as many enemies as they could with them and in the end, they brought down two English soldiers for every French one. The sight would stay in Darkhan's mind forever, the desperately outnumbered men fighting not to survive but to kill as much of the enemy as possible. Luckily, there had been so much chaos nobody saw Darkhan save James because that would have raised a lot of questions. Their squad returned to the capital tired and sick but they were victorious because and now was time to graduate and become knights. On the day Darkhan and James were to be knighted they went through a big parade to make their way to kneel in front of the king. As the king started his long speech Darkhan looked up and froze because on the throne next to the king sat Becca. His thoughts ground to a halt as he stared at her *Becca is the princess, how did I not know*. Becca looked at him and revealed a small smile as she winked at him. Finally, the king finished his speech and looked at the young knights to be and said "By my power as the king of England I declare you all knights, may you serve your country well". Everybody was cheering but Darkhan only had eyes for Becca. He went up to her at the party after and asked, "Why didn't you tell me you were a princess". She looked at him and said, "Would it have changed anything?" "Ummm, noo? I mean no". She smirked at him "That was the right answer". He sighed in relief that she was still the same Becca he knew, He said "you want to go to the garden to talk". As they walked and talked through the lush garden, he told her

all about his trip to the battlefield, and for some reason telling her comforted him but it couldn't last forever. "It's getting late so I need to tell you I'm going to go to the battlefield tomorrow and I don't know when I will return" said Darkhan. Becca looked at him and said sternly, "You must return safe". "I will try" he said then he hesitated and opened his mouth but before he could say anything Becca put a finger on his lips and said "tell me when you come back". Then she turned around and left. He looked at her and sighed then he went back to his room to prepare to go to the battlefield and in the morning. He met up with James and together they rode to the army camp.

Life in the army was plain and repetitive; they fought and when they weren't fighting they were training. Darkhan was famous for his incredible skill, speed, and strength in combat while James was famed for his brilliant military strategies. They were the perfect team and together they rose up in the ranks with Darkhan becoming a Captain and with James becoming his vice Captain. All the fighting made it clear to Darkhan that his heart and therefore the wind and earth wanted to protect so being a captain was the perfect position to do it. Darkhan and James had many successful battles together but they stood out too much and the French army planned an ambush for them. When they lowered their guards and set up camp for the night the French attacked. Darkhan was about to rush in to save his men but his lieutenants said it was futile and they had to retreat. Darkhan hesitated for a second but that second was enough for a volley of arrows to kill 200 out of his 1000 men. Everything sharpened for Darkhan and he was unified with the wind and earth as he screamed "charge" and rushed into the fray faster than anybody could see sending bodies flying with every attack. Under his fierce assault, the French turned around and retreated. Darkhan's soldiers looked at him in awe but he was staring blankly at the 200 soldiers that died. *If I hadn't listened to the lieutenants I could have saved them, why*

didn't I save them he thought. James walked up to him and wondered,, “Are you okay”. “No” said Darkhan “I could have saved them but I hesitated...why” tears were starting to fall. Then James slapped him “Do not fall into self-pity, if you really feel sorry do better next time” then he walked away. Darkhan looked at him walk away with shock then he sat down and looked at the ground. He listened to the wind and earth and his heart they whispered, “all is not lost”. “But I lost 200 of my men” Darkhan cried. “Imperfect victories are still victories” his heart whispered, “you still saved 800 men”. “But if I hadn’t hesitated I could have saved them all” Darkhan whispered. The wind rustled and the earth rumbled and together they seemed to say “what’s done is done what matters is you learn for **greater things are yet to come**”. “Yes that is right” Darkhan mumbled “I will do better”.

He never forgot the lesson he learned on that day as he fought with all he had, he became the most successful Captain in the army and eventually became its General. With Darkhan at its lead, the army began to push the french out of its land. Finally, they had the enemy army trapped. The French army attacked with all they had in a last-ditch attempt to kill as much of the enemy as possible. Darkhan, remembering that desperate battle and how a dead man would fight with all they had hesitated knowing they would have massive casualties if they fought, but also knowing this was a chance to end the war. He then remembered the command in his heart to protect and without any more hesitation ordered his army to retreat back across the rocky ground but to his horror, he saw they weren’t fast enough. Darkhan’s whole world narrowed to holding off the French to protect his men but it wasn’t only his men, if they fell England would fall including Becca and his parents. He sank more into his heart than ever before till the wind surged around him and the earth rumbled beneath him, his every step held a command to destroy those who dared to threaten his loved ones. The French army advanced and saw a single man standing

their way. For a timeless second, the French army and Darkhan stared at each other, and then the French army charged and Darkhan charged to meet them. Survivors of the battle swore Darkhan was a god. They said he moved faster than a bird and hit hard enough to destroy a castle wall; they said the wind created tornados and spikes shot out of the ground. The conclusion of the battle was the absolute annihilation of the French army- annihilated by one man.

After the battle, the victorious army returned to the capital where the king was waiting for them. When they saw the king they all kneeled. The king looked at them and said “Sir Darkhan of wind and earth is to be bestowed the title of a duke and may choose to claim his duchy anywhere in the kingdom”. Darkhan got up but he wasn’t looking at the king he was looking at Becca. Then he vanished and appeared right next to Becca and while everybody was trying to figure out what was happening he kissed her. After they broke apart he said, “I love you”. “Me too,” said Becca “Marry me” begged Darkhan. “Thought you’d never ask” she giggled. Some of the faster nobles just realized that Darkhan had kissed the princess and asked to marry her out of nowhere but then the king raised a hand. “I have known for many years your relationship with one another and I fully approve”. “Really” said Darkhan, stunned. “Really,” said the king, smiling. “Wait, I need to claim my duchy first so I’m qualified to marry a princess,” said Darkhna slightly panicked. “You don’t need to but if it makes you feel better go-ahead,” said the king. “I know just the place” said Darkhan “Will you come with me, Becca”. “Of course I’ll come with you” replied Becca. They traveled to the grasslands in between his village and the capital. He remembered riding across these plains on his way to the capital from his village and he had always been amazed by their beauty. They stopped at a particularly beautiful spot next to a river and dismounted their horses. As he stood there beside Becca and looked at the sparkling river and endless plains, he closed his eyes and felt the earth under his feet and the wind gently

blowing across the plain. His heart told him to protect and nurture this place so he opened his eyes and said “this is home”.