

# Une Image dans le Verre

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*When convenience and opportunity hand Akara a day when Kankuro and Temari have missions and Gaara is working late at the office, she discovers the creator of the beautiful stained glass windows of the Kazekage Manor. ChaosShipping*

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# 1 - An Image In Glass

New ficcie! \*gets out new gargantuan-sized tub of confetti\* YAY! \*throws confetti about\*

Akara had never really thought about exploring the Kazekage Manor. Oh sure, she'd been curious, but it had never really occurred to her to go explore the stately old house.

At least, not when Gaara and the others were around.

So when convenience and opportunity handed her a night when Temari and Kankuro had missions, and Gaara was working late at the office, she seized the opportunity to explore Kazekage Manor.

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She knew her room was in the South wing. She also remembered seeing amazing stained glass windows in every room, except her own. Each one depicted a different thing; whether it be vibrant coastal sunsets of breathtaking realism, or Water country marketplaces that were alive with shimmering colors so real, it made her want to take in a breath and expect to smell the ocean air mingling with the smell of fish and cooking dishes.

In any case, she wandered the hall, bare feet padding across the polished rosewood floors, running her hands along the bright yellow walls and reaching a thing she'd never noticed before. It was the most beautiful window that she'd seen so far: a coastal garden filled with tropical plantlife.

The flowers were so lifelike: the way that the hibiscus went from bright red to red-orange, finally fading into a vibrant orange; the way the champagne poppies were a transparent white; the vibrant Birds of Paradise curving gently into proud blooms of orange, royal blue, and lush purple. Proud parrots and cockatoos roosted in the swaying live oaks, showing off their plumage.

Akara stared for a good five minutes, basking in the beauty of it, before forcing herself to move on. Sighing, she turned at the corner it was displayed in and wandered into the East wing.

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Akara was nearly awestruck. Here again, she saw stained glass windows, vibrant flowers adorning every pane. She walked up to one, a blood orchid in full bloom. It seemed so real, the way its bloodred center bled into crimson, crimson bleeding into maroon. Had she not known better, and had it not been so large, she would have thought that the bloom was real. She meandered over to another, depicting a grape hyacinth. She admired its innocent appearance, the way the vivid blue faded to a light periwinkle, before she reached a door. Opening it, she gasped.

Temari's room was a greenhouse.

Quite literally, there were plants everywhere. Flowers grew in pots and jars, trees actually built into the terracotta tile flooring. Part of the roof and all of the back wall was a giant structure of stained glass, depicting even more floral patterns, and extending the garden into oblivion. Her bed was hung with a canopy of damask cloth, with ivy growing up the four thick wood posts. In the corner of the room, in stained glass, there was a panel in which a smiling Temari had been replicated, holding a bright yellow sunflower.

Akara stared, awestruck, gazing at the glass garden before pressing on to the West wing.

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Where the East wing had been about the earth, the West wing was all about that which is created by man.

That is to say, every stained glass window depicted a bustling cityscape from at least one Hidden Village or two. Stepping cautiously on the lush carpeting, Akara saw Suna in twilight, sandstone buildings reaching up like fingers to point to the heavens. She saw Konoha in the daytime, Hokage Monument shining and proud. Even the Land of Waves could be seen, with its very own Naruto Bridge connecting it to the mainland.

Kankuro's room had a different feel than his sisters; it was more metropolitan. She saw a large window depicting the view of Suna that lay just behind it, just at the time the sun was setting. She felt herself go dizzy with its magnificence. She even saw a little Kankuro standing atop a roof, holding a passport in hand and a knapsack on his back.

Akara enjoyed herself, trying to trace her route home in the window. Finding it cut off about three minutes after finding it, she sighed; leaving the room and turning the corner that led to the North wing.

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The North wing instantly struck her as a cold, mausoleum-like place. The windows here frightened her: one depicted a dragon, its serpentine body winding around an unsuspecting maiden, who'd fallen asleep in the wrong place. Another showed what seemed at first to be a youth with strawberry blonde hair and topaz eyes, but quickly changed into a roaring tanuki creating a storm from a massive breath. She was glad to find a door, and walked in.

A bed supported on large pillars of mahogany, hung with curtains of deep red brocade stood out in the center; the two large stained glass windows were hung with the same. The floor was hard, black marble; the plush rug red and furry, like Akamaru when his fur was rubbed the wrong way. The walls were a sandy color, the wardrobe and furnishings were of darkly polished mahogany. The bedsheets were crimson silk, the upholstery of the chaise lounge in the corner a similar kind.

The roof had a huge glass dome, with the night sky carefully crafted from stained glass. A perpetual full moon hung above. The two windows were stained glass, one of which opened out to the balcony, where a staircase led to the roof. The first of these, the one leading to the balcony, showed a willow tree in a windswept meadow. The grass seemed to move, the willow to bend slightly to the wind's ministrations. But it wasn't this that caught Akara's attention.

The second window was of the finest quality Akara had seen in all her exploration of the house. It held a man in flowing robes, holding an hourglass filled with black sand, with flaming red hair and piercing green eyes. Akara gasped.

*She was standing in Gaara's room!*

"I'd thank you to leave my quarters, Akara-san," said a voice. Akara whirled around.

"Gaara-san! I didn't mean to..."

Gaara walked into his room, sweeping about like a man who knew his place in the world, and also knew that it as a very important place indeed. Akara gasped.

"There's no reason to be alarmed," he said, turning her head to face him, "It is just that, I'd much rather you saw it with my permission."

"These windows...all through the house...who made them?"

Gaara chuckled. "I did."

"You?!"

"Of course, nature can take some of the fall for making sand the ingredient in glass and making me able to manipulate it."

Akara was still shaking. Gaara walked over to the chaise and motioned for her to sit. She did so.

"All of the glasswork in this manor was done by me. It was my hobby, keeping me preoccupied while also keeping me from doing something my father would regret."

"But all that work..."

"...was the result of years of pain and turmoil. After all, that's what this wing is decorated with."

She stared at her feet. "I should go to sleep now," she said, rising to leave. Gaara watched as she did, and sank into thought. That night, Gaara spent his time in his workshop, bending metal frames and pouring colored glass.

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Gaara was finished. After a month of hard work, his masterpiece was finally finished. However, Temari and Kankuro were the only two to witness it, Akara being out on a mission at the time.

"Wow Gaara...this is definitely your best work yet," said Temari, looking it over in awe.

Kankuro nodded. "Kara-chan is gonna flip when she sees this."

Gaara pulled off his heavy leather gloves, and cocked his head to one side. Appraising the work, he blinked.

"Do you think so," he asked, surveying the piece for flaws. Temari laughed.

"She'll love it. I can't wait to see it when it's installed."

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Akara returned home, wolfed down some food, and took a nice, long shower. She dressed quickly, and threw her dirty clothes into the wicker basket that served as hamper for her clothes. She entered the room, and stood stock-still, frozen in shock.

Her previously plain balcony window had been removed. In its place, there stood a beautiful stained glass piece. It depicted a woman in gauze-like clothing, her eyes demurely pointed to the floor. Her hands reached out before her, cupping a beautiful rose bloom in her palms. Her pale skin shone preternaturally opaque and white, and she had only the faintest blush on her cheeks. But what Akara was staring at was the woman's hair. The woman had red bangs and black hair.

The image in the glass was her.

After a long silence, she noticed a note on her endtable. She picked it up slowly, eyes not leaving the window. She stopped her staring to read the note.

*To the woman who loves my art.*  
*-Sabaku no Gaara*

Done! Yay! \*throws more confetti\*