

## The Alpha's Mate Who Cried Wolf Chapter 161

It's almost nightfall, and we have barely covered the tiniest fraction of the mountain. Alec stops in front of me, 'You won't be able to see the sceptre in the dark. You also need to eat and rest, and I need to feed as well. Let's make a fire to keep you warm through the night. First,' he says.

I collect the sticks, and Alec finds a couple of small logs. As soon as we stack them into a pile, I point my finger about to cast the fire spell, but a large gust of flame blows past me and ignites it. I turn and find Vermillion sitting like a dog, staring at the fire.

'Thanks,' I laugh.

I sit beside Alec, but he pulls me onto his lap. His fangs protrude, and he instantly bites into my neck, making me yelp. He drinks more than usual, then lings his head back in satisfaction before gazing into my eyes. He kisses my forehead, then my nose and then nuzzles back into my neck, where he slides his tongue across the puncture marks sending wild and pleasurable sensations throughout my body. He then kisses each of them and sits me up to face him. He grins.

'You were hungry,' I sate.

'Famished,' he smiles but then frowns. 'You should eat. You will need to keep your strength up,' he says, reaching his hand over to grab my satchel and passing it to me.

I smile, 'Thanks, I'm pretty hungry myself, so I'll eat now, too,' I say as I slide off his lap and sit beside him. I open the bag, grab the pouch of water, and drink half of it. The bread smells delicious, and it's very soft. I love the smell of freshly baked bread. I pull the bread in parts, place bits of cheese on top, and chow it all down.

I lay my head on Alec's lap, and he entwines his hand over mine, and we stare into the crackling fire.

When I open my eyes, it's morning. Alec caresses the hair from my face as I sit up.

'Good morning, my beautiful Queen,' he says.

'Good morning to my handsome Vampire King,' I smile.

'We shan't waste time. The sooner we find this sceptre, the better,' Alec says, standing and helping me up.

We start at the base of the mountain but at a different location. Each step up the hill becomes harder as hours go by. I sit against a tree to rest.

'There has to be a better way to do this?' I say to Alec.

Alec shrugs.

I watch a black feather floating in front of me. At first, I assume it's one of Reaper's until a white feather also floats down. I look back to see Reaper is still flying around low further back in search of the sceptre.

I reach out, take the white feather, and give Alec a worried glance before I hear women screeching. I quickly stand and jump away in time as a Harpy soars down from the sky toward me. Her clawed fingers swiped against the tree I was leaning on, leaving three thick long claw marks.

'Nina!' Alec shouts and pulls me behind him.

He summons a dark mist that rises toward the Harpy. It wraps around her, closing her white wings, and making her fall to the ground, but another Harpy with black wings strikes Alec. His shadow power dissipates from around the other Harpy. I kneel over Alec as he holds his bleeding arm. I raise my hands towards the now freed Harpy, coming toward us, 'Repeliate!' I shout. She is thrown back against the tree with great force.

Reaper rises around the black-winged Harpy and uses the same power as Alec causing a shadow to wrap around her. She falls to the ground.

The Harpy against the tree rises up and screeches loudly. Suddenly a dozen other harpies appear.

'Inferno Flamo!' I shout, raising a hand in her direction.

A flame emits from my hand and engulfs her.

A large shadow shoots over us, and I realise it's Vermillion. He rises towards the other harpies and breathes fire at them. He engulfs all but two, who manage to dodge his flame.

Alec stands and walks over to the harpy wrapped in shadows. He hovers his hand over her. The Harpy begins to disintegrate into ash as the dark mist draws back to his hand.

The last two harpies race toward us. The nails on their clawed fingers extend even longer. Reaper perches on my shoulder. I raise my chin and narrow my eyes at the Harpies, 'Tumultuous Volley,' I say.

A storm cloud appears above them, and lightning strikes them dead.

I lower my hands and close them and watch the cloud disappear.

I turn and face Alec, 'They're getting closer,' I say in a worried tone.

Alec clenches his hand tighter over his arm and glares into the distance.

Reaper rises above the trees and mind-links Alec and me, 'More Harpies are coming this way. Hundreds more, Minotaur as well. The land in the distance is looking more barren. There are many sinkholes? Could be the Death Worms.'

My breathing becomes heavy. I look up at Alec, 'We're going to have to split up. We need to find the sceptre now before they reach the mountain and destroy it. If they come across the sceptre before us, we are all truly doomed.'

'We will split up then, but the moment they reach the mountain, if we still haven't found it, then Reaper, Vermillion and myself will fight as many as we can off whilst you keep searching for it,' Alec replies.

'No, there are too many of them,' I say to him.

'Then we best get looking, so we can avoid that outcome,' he says.

With a dash, he disappears from in front of me to a different mountain area to help me search.

Reaper rises low and searches in the trees while I stay on foot, searching along the ground, in and around bushes and amongst the debris of sticks and leaves.

I need to get up high and look down to see more ground. I whistle, and a moment later, Vermillion lands next to me with a thud. 'Good boy,' I say to him and pat his head. I then climb up onto his back. 'I need you to fly up ahead. Maybe to that cliff area over there?' I say to him.

He flaps his wings and rises up to the ledge of the cliff. I climb down from his back. I can see a lot of ground from here. I slowly scan the area, starting on my left and going to my right. With all my concentration, it takes me a moment to realise Alec is mind-linking me.

'I'll begin fighting them off,' he says.

'Wait! What?' I reply.

'The minotaur are all at the base of the mountain. They have just spread out. The Harpies are flying together in small groups, also spreading out,' he says.

'Do you think they're looking for us?' I ask.

'Possibly or for anyone to kill or take back as a prisoner to Thypon,' he says. 'You need to hurry,' he adds.

'Promise me, Alec. You will retreat if you need to?'

There is silence.

'Alec?'

'The fate of the world, the fate of your life. Your survival is at stake, Nina. If being killed gives you a chance to live, then... so be it,' he says.

'Alec! I will find the sceptre, and you will retreat and come back to me. That's not a request but an order,' I growl.

I hear him laugh through the mind link, 'You better find your sceptre quick-smart then,' he says.

With no moment to lose, I continue to scan the area and mind-link Reaper to help Alec. After scanning the area, I can't see the sceptre, so I reach my hands up to the high ledge behind me. As I pull myself up, I see something glimmer for a second from the sunlight in the distance.

Could it be? I shuffle myself forward away from the ledge and stand. I squint my eyes and wait in hope, and then it happens. A tree branch moves in the wind, allowing a small ray of sunshine. Something flickers red from the light. I'm unsure what colour the sceptre is or what it has on it. Please, Selene. Let this be it, I say. As I'm about to run toward it, I hear Alec shout to my right. He must be in trouble. Without a thought, I decide to help Alec and retrieve the wand afterwards.

'Skedaddle dash,' I say, blinking from one spot to another until I reach Alec. Minotaur surrounds him with three harpies above him. He holds his hands out, and the ground around him rumbles. Hands and arms of shadow reach out from the ground and hold the legs of the Minotaur. They try to break free but doing so pulls the Shadow Reapers out from the ground. They turn into mist and lunge into the mouths of the minotaur, taking over their minds. They begin to fight each other instead of Alec. The ground rumbles again, but this time it's not from Alec. The ground beneath his feet begins to sink. 'Skedaddle Dash!' I say, blinking and appearing next to him. I wrap my arms from behind him, 'Skedaddle Dash,' I say again, blinking with him and appearing a few dozen metres away. A death worm rises out from the ground where we had just been standing, snapping its teeth. It plunges back into the ground, and we feel it burrowing through the ground toward us.

'Keep still,' Mind-links. 'Remember, it can't hear us. They follow the vibrations from our movements.'

I nod and wait nervously as it's still coming towards us. Why is it still coming toward us? I try to slow my breathing, scared it may be able to pick up the erratic beating of my heart. Suddenly it stops a few metres in front of us. It moves to the left and stops again.

'It's trying to figure out where we are,' I mind-link Alec.

He nods. The Deathworm continues to move around, but now slowly.

Shrieking, yelling, and screams can be heard in the distance. We glance up to see a horde of Harpies, Minotaur and now dragons coming this way. I take a step back in fear causing the Death Worm to stop and turn back in our direction, 'Wands,' I say.

'Run,' Alec says, grabbing my wrist and pulling me behind him.

But the Death Worm burrows past us and emerges from the ground like a snake. It opens its mouth and lets out a horrible shrill.

'Electrous Flaros!' I shout.

A large bolt of lightning comes down from the sky. The Death worm explodes as the bolt strikes it. Its flesh lies everywhere, some smacking against Alec and me. It thinks so bad. We hang our arms out at the flesh and goop sliding off us and look at each other in disgust. I feel my stomach churn.

'Ergh, this is so gross,' I say to him.

Only three Minotaur are still alive but remain fighting each other.

Reaper has the harpies entwined in shadows. They turn into ash as the shadows squeeze them. Vermillion drops from the sky and breathes fire at the minotaur.

I shake my arms and run towards them, 'Alec, we must hurry. We won't be able to defeat the horde of monsters alone if they get to us.'

We climb onto Vermillion's back, and Reaper rises up into the sky beside him.

'We have to find the sceptre, though,' Alec says.

I smile, 'I think I found it, but we need to lead the horde away from the mountain. Then we can go back and get it,' I say to Alec.

Vermillion rises down low above the horde and then up again. They change their direction and follow us. Everything is going to plan until many screeches are heard above us. We look up to see all the dragons flying toward us.