

Traded To The Lycan King by MG Wattsons

Chapter 161

Hayes scoffs, his thumb coming up and rubbing over his lips before he nods and clears his throat.

"You are right. We really should get a move on." He grumbles, brushing past me. I roll my eyes and chuckle to myself. He is so used to being in charge that he forgets I am the tracker and he is heading in the wrong direction. "Might be better if we head in the right direction." I say, crossing my arms over my chest, not bothering to hide my cocky smirk. "Unless you would rather take the long way."

Hayes slows before coming to a stop, his head hanging low as he turns to look at me. He places his hands on his hips as if he is trying to restrain himself, then he mutters under his breath before he walks back toward me. "Less time with you, the better it is for both of us." He says, flashing me a forced smile.

"Seemed like you wanted to spend time with me earlier," I grumble before I roll my eyes and turn to the left and walk away from him.

"That wasn't exactly quality time, Kyra." He says behind me. "It was-"

"Just a quick fuck?" I grind out, finishing the sentence for him. "Yes, Hayes, I am aware of that. You do know that you are not the first man I have been with, right? I know what it feels like to be loved and now I know what it feels like to be used. Thank you so much for that lesson."

"Wait a minute." He scoffs, rushing past me before he puts his hands out to keep me from walking further. "You are the one who came onto me, Kyra. It was you who kissed me."

What he doesn't realize is that it was his words and confession that made me weak enough to act on the bond. I didn't want to kiss the man who left me for dead and then tried to make me watch him die. That was the cruelty of the moon goddess and her damn games she plays on us for the fun of it. I rub my face and shake my head.

"Can we just...agree it was a mutual arrangement to scratch an itch? And now we can consider the itch scratched and we can move on." I say, feeling a bubble of confusion as he frowns at me. He has no right to act like this isn't exactly what he planned or wanted. "And yet you keep bringing it up," he says, "Like you can't get it out of your head."

"I do not! And It just happened, I haven't had the time to get it out of my head." I scoff, offended by his preposterous accusation.

"It's fine Ky, I get it. You aren't the only one who struggles with no strings attached sex." He shrugs, looking smugly at me.

I guffaw, a dark chuckle bursting from my lips. This asshole really thinks so highly of himself, even when he wants to die and is such a dickhead. No strings attached. Right, the issue I have with everything isn't the lack of strings, but the insurmountable strings that only I can apparently feel tugging at me.

"I haven't scented Ezra since before I was struck by that tree. So hopefully, if we head back that way, we can find something." I murmur, choosing to take the high road.

Well, more like the silent road, unless it refers to Ezra.

"Really?" He scoffs. "You are resorting to ignoring the whole thing now?"

"Sure am. Now, shut up so I can listen for anything out of the ordinary." I say, shooting him a scowl.

We probably should discuss it..." he says, gently and for the first time, it feels like he is actually being sincere.

"What is there left to discuss, Hayes?"

I wait for him to keep talking, but when he doesn't, I look at him curiously. He looks away before he finally meets my gaze with pity in his eyes. My brows furrow in shock as he takes a step closer to me and then sighs heavily.

"What?" I ask, a feeling in my stomach making me more nervous than I was when I kissed him. [SEAR*ch the Findnovel.net website](http://www.findnovel.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Was that your first time since Tyler?" He asks, his voice soft and coaxing as if he is trying to tread lightly.

My face heats and my lungs grow tight. I instantly look away, unable to think of a single word to say to him. I came to terms with losing Tyler and our baby some time ago. Not to say that I moved on, but that I know what he wanted for me if I ever lost him.

It was a conversation we had once the war started to rage. I loved Tyler, but my world did not cease to exist when I lost him. We both know I couldn't go through that after how terribly I took Hayes' initial rejection.

"Truth be told, that was my first time doing something like that." I say, clearing my throat. Hayes' eyes grow wide and then his brows knit together.

"Are you saying I took your virginity?" He asks. It is clear Hayes is not following what I mean. I scoff and roll my eyes.

"No, Hayes. Tyler and I made love. It was never a quickie in the woods against a tree. It was the two of us. making a promise, showcasing how we felt about each other." I whisper, remembering how much he hated anything that seemed rushed. Tyler was a romantic, one who, even when he was tempted, took his time and planned things out.

"Are you serious?" Hayes asks, looking appalled. "You guys never had the passion to just do it and then go about your day?" "You know what, never mind. This isn't a topic I want to discuss with you." I mutter.

"Oh, come on, I'm just shocked, that is all." He claims, but I can see the way my words seem to befuddle him. It's clear to me he doesn't have a romantic bone in his body, even if he occasionally says something that makes it damn near impossible to not kiss him.

"How about you tell me about Leandra?" I ask, whipping around to glare at him. His face hardens, his lip twitching in a sneer.

"Maybe silence is the best route for us." He grits out.

"My thoughts exactly." I grumble. "Follow my lead and try not to get yourself and me killed."

The tension between us is thicker than it was before I gave into the pull of the bond. I can feel every look he gives me, as if his eyes were a stream of fire from a dragon's mouth on my back. "What do we do when we find Ezra?" I ask him.

"You don't have to worry about that." He says, not happy with me. I exhale, showing him my dissatisfaction.

"Well, the last time you saw him, you went crazy and nearly got us both killed. So forgive me for wanting to know what the hell to expect."

"You know, I kind of thought fucking you would make you a little less uptight and snarky," he snarks from behind me.

My emotions swirl in a mixture of homicidal rage and disappointment as my body responds to the thought of us having sex earlier. I had hoped it would lessen the desire to be in his arms, or at least put it off for a while longer. And yet, his anger only sets me off in a blaze of desire.

"Can you not say things like that?" I hiss at him, whirling around to shove at his chest. He stands, unmoved, looking down at me.

"What part?" He teases.

"The part where you said you guys fucked." I hear behind me. Hayes grins, his arms crossing over his chest as he looks over my shoulder.

"I wondered if you would find us first," He says with a chuckle. I refuse to turn around, my face blazing red with embarrassment. The last thing I want to do is look at Marcos and everyone else.

"Well, we didn't exactly sit and twiddle our thumbs after watching you two go into the water. And here we thought you guys were in real danger." Nisha says, a teasing lilt to her voice.

"Well, it wasn't exactly a fantastic adventure." Hayes says before he smirks, his eyes meeting mine before he winks. "Other than the quickie, of course."

Anger blooms and I glare up at him, tears threatening to fall down my cheeks. It's not that I like Marcos exceedingly well. I may have played it off that way to Hayes, but the truth is. That wasn't just sex to me, to him it was. I know that now.

He used me, and now I am the butt of his joke. Just another fallen woman at his feet for him to laugh at with his war buddies. Shame on me for giving in. Shame on me for still having an ounce of feelings for him.

"Fuck you, Hayes" I grit out, low.

"Sounds like you already did," Koda teases and I inhale deeply, spinning to look at everyone, my shoulders squared.

"Enough." I hiss, looking back at Hayes. His smirk falters as I shake my head. "You can share details and laugh all you want when I am out of earshot."

"I'll walk with you," Dean offers, clearly trying to be nice.

"No, I'd rather be alone." I grumble, yet again finding my heading and walking away.

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Chapter 162

Hayes

"No one goes anywhere alone," I remind her, my voice threatening as I take two steps after her. Her red hair flips around, loose strands brushing over her flushed cheeks as her eyes bore into mine.

"Send someone with me and they will come back with a black eye." She says. It almost sounds like a warning, but the more I see the anger burning behind her glare, the more I realize she is making me a promise. "Even Marcos?" I murmur low enough for her to hear, then I quirk a single brow in retaliation for her attitude.

"I don't discriminate when I am angry." She says, taking two steps away before she turns on her heels and walks off into the trees.

I watch her with my stomach twisting in knots as my fingers twitch and my jaw clenches. She walks off gracefully with her head held high and yet, my eyes fall to her waist, watching it sway from side to side like a sex crazed idiot.

Should I have stopped myself? Maybe. Did I want to? No, and therein lies the problem. Nisha used to scratch an itch. For many of us, but that is why Koda does not care about her past.

We meant nothing to her, and she meant nothing to us. She is a friend, someone who was as broken as the rest of us, just seeking comfort for a night, a way to forget and not look back.

But Kyra...She tastes like my past and somehow my future. I restrained myself long enough to make sure she was willing and okay with what happened... but beyond that; I was selfish, and I didn't need another reason to hate myself. And yet, here I am, crossing off another mark. Reason five hundred something for why I deserve to die.

"Everything all good?" Dean asks, stepping up next to me.

"Yep." I lie and from the corner of my eye, I can see him nodding.

"So we are going to lie to each other now?" He asks, and I look over my shoulder for the others. Koda and Nisha chat with Marcos, who watches the place where Kyra disappeared as if trying to will her back.

"Does it count as a lie if I'm lying to myself about it, too?" I mutter, my chest rising with a deep inhale before I blow the air through my nose, trying to center myself. Kyra seems to weave her web around me in every damn way possible, and I am tethered to her. Everything about her just...sets me off.

"Maybe you should go after her," He offers and I scoff.

"Are you kidding me? She will one hundred percent punch anyone who goes after her." I snort. "No, I will let her calm down and when she comes back, everything will be fine."

"Or it will be worse." Dean says, and I scowl at him.

"Well, that is not fucking helpful." I mutter and he slaps me on the back.

"Didn't say I was trying to be helpful, just trying to be someone you can talk to." He grins.

"Hayes..." Marcos says, walking up to me and Dean with a look of worry. "Can I talk to you?"

I furrow my brow and look at Dean, who puts his hands up and steps away, leaving me with the only person I feel like beating to a pulp for no reason. Well, perhaps there is a reason, but not one I am ready to acknowledge yet. "What's up, Marcos?" I ask him and he clears his throat.

"Did you or Kyra have any injuries that needed to be looked at?" he asks.

It is obvious he is disappointed, or at least forlorn. Clearly, he likes Kyra as much as she likes him. Well, maybe more, considering she ended up in my arms and not his.

I smirk to myself, relishing that little nugget of information. She chose me, even if she didn't mean to. Even if I don't deserve it or her, I was the one she sought comfort and pleasure from.

"Kyra was struck pretty hard and knocked out for some time, but she seems fine now." I tell him. His eyes widen.

"She seems fine?" He asks, disbelieving. I adjust my stance, turning toward him as I cross my arms over my chest and look him up and down.

"Yes, she seemed fine. She was banged up pretty good, but I could see her wounds healing as she slept." I tell him, my voice harsh, to remind him I am still the person in charge here, even if he doesn't like me very much right now. "And you didn't think that maybe her agreeing to have sex with you might be a part of her injury?" He asks, again, like I am some idiot.

"I assure you, Kyra was given ample

opportunities to say no and stop,

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and yet she chose not to." My tongue rolls over my teeth when realize he is insinuating I took advantage of her in some way, that she might not have been in the right state of mind to make the decision she made.

For a second, my heart stutters...is he right? Did I take advantage of her when she was injured? Had she seemed like she wasn't in control of her thoughts or actions?

Truthfully, I can't recall. I was too caught up in her and the way she looked at me. The way she kissed me before I had the chance to close the distance. And the spark...the one I can still feel at my fingertips. My hands clench and I scoff, chuckling I dryly as I pace away from him, only to turn my rage on him.

"Are you saying you think I took advantage of her, Marcos?" I grit out. He blinks at me, his body unwavering as I get in his face, ready to tear him to shreds.

"I am asking." He says. "Did you take advantage of her, Hayes? Are you certain it was what she wanted?"

Fuck.

I drag my hand through my hair, taking a few steps back before I shake my head.

"No. No, I did not take advantage of her." I say, certain. Well, mostly certain. "I know Kyra better than I know myself. Not only would I never do anything to hurt her, I would have been able to read her enough to know she wasn't being herself." He exhales deeply, looking comforted by my answer. "This may sound off but, how did she look? Skin wise, was her chest discolored or her side?"

"Uh," I think back, trying to recall how she looked before I pulled the shirt over her body.

She was bruised nearly instantly. But she was covered in dirt and mud, so verifying what was bruising and mud wasn't exactly easy. And when we had sex, I didn't exactly undress her. It was unromantic, and quick.

Hell, it was more than scratching an itch like I made her feel. It was a need. Like a traveler lost in the desert for days who just found water. It felt like it was life or death.

"You don't remember?" Marcos asks, "I suppose it must not have been that bad if you can't recall it."

"No, it's more...I dressed her when she was knocked out and we didn't exactly... undress for what we did, just sort of rearranged..." I try to explain, feeling weird by saying it all out loud.

Marcos seems to think, his eyes where she was minutes before.

"Shit." he sighs. "I really wish I would have been able to look before she walked off."

"She is a Lycan. She will be fine," I assure him, and he shakes his head.

"There are things we can't see internally that can still make us weak, Hayes. Our bodies heal fast, yes, but some things take more time, especially if damage is significant. The moment she relaxes, she might end up passing out, or realizing she is in pain. Kyra really shouldn't be out there alone." He

seems genuinely worried.

"Are you looking for an excuse to go follow her?" I ask, eyeing him for a moment. He glares at me but says nothing. [SEARCH the findnovel.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"You should go fetch her," he says after a minute. "She can have her alone time after I have looked her over."

"Hayes!" Nisha hisses, making us both look back at her. She points toward the sky as the scent of smoke brushes over my nostrils. My muscles go rigid, my lycan growing restless. "Dragons."

"Fuck, that's the way Kyra went," Marcos grumbles, sprinting forward.

Of course it is. She is a tracker, after all, which means she lied. Kyra wasn't looking for quiet; she was looking for Ezra and trying to keep us in the dark.

"Damn it, Kyra." I growl, racing off after Marcos.

Chapter 163

Kyra

Trees blur past me as I sprint past trees, my lycan relishing every second of freedom as she drives us further from the group. This is exactly the type of fresh air I need.

The kind that is full of clues and a hint of burning wood. Someone is out here and I intend to find them before the others realize I picked up a scent before they did. Not that I think it is Ezra. In fact, I know it's not.

No matter how I would have explained it before, Hayes would have put his foot down and demanded we go as a group, but truth be told, I travel faster on my own. Not only that, but regardless of how things have turned out since being near Hayes, I can take care of myself. It's likely I need to prove it to myself again.

I glance up, the smell of smoke tickling my muzzled face as I slow for a moment, my fur prickling as I sense someone near. The trees provide me enough cover as I hide behind them, dropping my shirt from my claw and shifting back into my human form. As I tug it

down over my head, I lean into the rough bark of the tree, searching until I see the massive frame sitting near a campfire.

In the light, I can see his forlorn face and dark hair as he throws bits of a broken stick into the flames, as if lost in a daydream. He looks lonely, his demeanor all too familiar. Who ever he is, he isn't some hunter in the woods like the dragons I have come across, and he sure as shit isn't all too concerned about being found.

My head tilts to the side as I move silently around in a wide berth, my eyes watching him as I come around to his backside. There is no one else with him, just a singular dragon shifter on his own in the woods. Which means he is either exiled or strong enough of a fighter he doesn't need to travel in pairs.

I move from my foliage cover, going closer as I watch him, waiting for him to notice my presence. He doesn't seem to notice as I break a stick, trying to garner his attention.

Whether it is smart or not, I move around him, standing facing him with the fire between us. After a moment he lifts his gaze to meet mine, a slow blinking before his chest rises in a deep breath.

"Can I help you?" He asks, his voice gruff though not as demanding as his words make him seem.

"Unlikely." I admit and he smirks, just a small twitch of his lip up ticking before he goes back to throwing his broken stick. "Are you alone?"

"That's the punishment." He mutters, a flicker of anger and then indifference over his face.

"You are a dragon..." I say, looking him over as I reach back and take a seat on the ground, inviting myself to his little party.

"I am," He says warily, pausing only slightly before going about his business.

"And you are alone?" I ask, reiterating what he said as I continue to scan the area. He finally stops, a sigh breaking from his lips as he raises his eyes and blinks at me.

"That is what I meant when I said that is the punishment, yes." He tells me, his brows furrowing as if he is trying to get a read on me and my purpose without asking the question. "What is it you want with me? Have you come to try to kill me, too?" A chuckle breaks from my lips as I shake my head.

"I'm not in the habit of killing someone who isn't actively attacking me." I tell him and he nods.

"Well, I have no intention of fighting you or any others so you can be on your way, Lycan." he mutters, looking away.

"I just have one question. Any chance you have seen a fae around here with an egg?" I ask him, ignoring his dismissal of me.

There is a change in the air, his back straightening and his chin cocking to the side. He finally seems interested in me as his eyes grow more curious. Then he leans forward, his elbows on his knees and his demeanor more guarded as he watches me with interest. "Have you?" He asks, an urgency in his voice that makes me grin.

"Weirdly enough, I have." I tell him, watching as his eyebrows raise in surprise. "But I lost him as I was swept away in a mudslide."

"Recently?" He asks and I nod. "Do you mind sharing in which direction you saw him?"

"Ehhh, yeah, I do mind actually." I tell him, rubbing my hands together slightly to keep them warm. "We are kind of enemies at the moment, so it wouldn't be in my best interest to share that with you. I am sure you understand." A low chuckle rumbles from his chest, and he shakes his head. [SEARCH THE findηovel.net website](http://www.findηovel.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"We are far from enemies," he says. "In fact, I am willing to bet we probably want the same thing, or something close to the same."

"Oh? The annihilation of the entire dragon race for their betrayal and crimes committed against the other races?" I ask and he looks down, picking up a bigger twig, a sly smile on his face.

"Well, perhaps not the same exact thing." He smirks, then shrugs. "I want the truth to be known and the king to be dethroned."

"What truth is that?" I ask, crossing my legs under me. As I settle in to have a longer chat, curious to know his story. He is powerful. I can feel it in the way he carries himself, his demeanor as he answers and asks questions. "That the lycans and werewolves are not responsible for all of this," He says, his gaze meeting mine with such sincerity that I find my mouth dry.

"A dragon that has sense? Kind of feels like a trap, if you ask me." I tease and he glares at me before silence falls over us, only the crackling of the coals and the heat between us as we refuse to look away from each other.

"What do you want?" he finally asks again, a little more determined for an answer and I shrug, not exactly sure what I am looking for, but knowing I need to be here right now. It feels as if, for some reason, we may be able to help each other.

"I am not sure I believe you haven't seen the fae." I tell him.

"If Ezra were to cross my path, I promise you would not find him ever."

"You would hide him?" I ask, wondering if I somehow misjudged this entire meeting, and he barks out a laugh.

"In a fiery grave, yes." He frowns

before he stands, his body rising

higher before he takes two large steps around the fire toward me. "As much as I have enjoyed the company, either you tell me who you are and what you want or I make you leave."

To say I am intimidated feels like too weak of a word. His aura drowns me in danger, making my palms sweat and my heart race. "You could always introduce yourself," I remind him, trying to keep my composure and not show him I am scared. He clenches his jaw.

"I am not someone you want to play games with." He grits out, "It has taken much energy to not be rude, but I have hit my limit."

"I am Kyra," I rush out, "And I am tracking that Fae to end this war, well, in hopes of ending this war."

He exhales before he lifts his hand up and drags it through his black hair.

"That fae is just as elusive as the dragon king's mind." He mutters in annoyance. "I assume this is Merikh and Colette's plan? Hunt down the fae who has the egg and try to return it?" "Something to that effect." I tell him, standing from the ground, inching back so I can make a run for it if I need to.

"Can you take me to Merikh and Colette?" He asks, something coming over him, a sort of excitement, or perhaps a bud of hope. I shake my head, a frown coming to my lips.

"I highly doubt they will want to see a random dragon-"

"I am not random." He growls, "My

name is I

dragonan and I am, or was, the

dragon prince. The heir to the throne until Giselle rotted my father's mind, and he lived through the loss of a

mate. I am the
reason your
made her escape from our
hoard."

"And you are hunting for the egg too?" I ask. Everything suddenly makes sense. "So you can kill the hybrid inside it and remain the next heir."

Chapter 164

"No," Teiran says with a small frown. "This has nothing to do with what my birthright is and everything to do with what is right."

I watch him for a moment, weighing the truth of his words, searching for anything I may construe as a lie. But I find nothing, as if he has nothing to hide. Maybe he is being honest, and perhaps he is someone I could trust. But that does not mean I should or will. "Why do you want to see the Alpha and Luna?" I ask him.

"I trust your Luna, and I believe she can help me." He says like it's such an obvious thing.

"But the question is, does she trust you?" I arch a brow and he looks away.

"I see we will make no headway with this. So instead, I will be the one to go out on a limb and extend trust first." He says, his intense eyes landing on me.

"And how do you plan to do that?"

"I will share with you all the Information I have at my disposal. Dragons can not breed hybrids." He says, walking away from me, his back turned before he groans as he lowers himself to a log beside the fire. "How do you know if no one has ever tried?" I ask, following him. He exhales and then shakes his head.

"The first-born child is and will always be the strongest dragon. A dragon can not exist where there is another being. It is why vampires have no effect on us when we are bitten. Our beasts are territorial and they do not allow for sharing of minds."

"We used to believe no one could have hybrids in general," I remind him. "And now we have a Luna who is a hybrid with a siren. Things that have not been tested can't be confirmed as impossible until it's been tried."

"That egg is a dragon." He says, a look in his eyes telling me he truly believes that. "It is not only just a dragon, but it is my sibling."

"It could be a Phoenix. Or a dragon or some crazy version of the two. It is fantastic that you want to believe that there is nothing amiss with that egg, but the truth is that you can't know. No one can until it is hatched and we see what it is." "Once I have the egg, I will be able to tell." He says, and I scoff.

"Like you all could tell that Giselle wasn't a dragon? Forgive me for sounding pessimistic, but I am highly doubting your ability to tell."

"I could tell." He whispers, looking into the fire that seems to burn yet emits no smoke. "Through the haze of magic and thread of lies, I knew she was not what she claimed to be."

I exhale, my shoulders heaving up before dropping.

"Look, I can't take you to Luna Colette or Alpha Hayes because we are not headed in that direction."

"There is a high likelihood you will need to head back sooner rather than later, with or without what you are looking for." He says, leaning forward, his eyes boring into mine. "Dragons are at your doorstep, eager for vengeance and what they think you have stolen from them."

I swallow the lump in my throat, knowing he is right. If we don't speed things up, there is a chance we will have no home to go back to. The pressure of everyone's lives rests on my shoulders, our shoulders, and I can't even focus long enough to track or fight the way I should.

"My kind is safe for now," I tell him, trying to convince myself as well. "With the help of the sirens and the occasional other species jumping in to take sides..."

He arches a brow, looking amused. "I don't mean to speak down to you or ill of your kind, but have you seen a dragon in true form? We are not small in mass or numbers. Vampires do not scare us and no other species can rule us. It is why the treaty was so important. We value structure and laws almost as much as we value beautiful things."

"And yet here you are claiming to be on my side?" I say, making him smile.

"I am on the side of the dragons."

Don't misconstrue my words for lack of loyalty to my kind. But my kind needs saving just as much as yours. They are following a demented king who needs to be removed from his throne, as his choices are no longer

made in the interest of our kind but his own personal vendetta."

I mull over his words and our interaction. Hayes would never in a million years want to team up with a dragon. Especially not the son of the person who led to so many horrifying deaths. But then again, who better to track a dragon egg than a dragon? And when we come across his kind, maybe he could be of use. "I have killed dragons." I tell him, making sure he looks me right in the eyes.

"And I have killed lycans," he says with ease. "We must do what we have to in order to survive. Not all dragons are decent."

A scream breaks out in the distance, making my skin crawl as it dies out in a guttural sputtering. I am on my feet before I realize it, taking steps toward it, passing Teiran. A rough, warm hand touches my arm gently and I blink at it before looking at his large frame as he shakes his head. "You will survive longer if you don't rush after the sound of death." He says, nearly pleading.

"It could be someone in my group that needs help." I say, my brows pulled together, confused by his lack of interference.

"That sound? The silence? That is the sign that you are already too late. What has happened can't be undone."

"No, but I can still investigate." I tell him, pulling away from his touch. "Tell you what, you can sit here and contemplate your next move or you can prove to me that you can be trusted. Then, perhaps, I will find a way to get you to Luna Colette to speak with them."

I take two steps away, still facing

him, before I spin on my heel and break into a sprint, heading toward the noise see a column of smoke through the treetops and I realize that this is the scent I had been following before I ran into Teiran. His flame distracted me, but now that I think back, it had no smoke, no smell.

What would have happened to me had I missed his little camp? Would I have run into whatever is further in the woods? Is it truly an enemy or one of the groups I came with, or am I overthinking things? There is no doubt the scream was feminine, yet my heart pounds in my ears at the thought that maybe it is Hayes. Or at the very least, maybe he is in trouble with this person?

My foot slips on a root, causing me to twist my ankle and stumble to the side, my shoulder ramming into a tree with a small protruding knot. My skin breaks open the second I hit and I bite back a groan. "Shit." I mumble, clutching my shoulder tight with my opposite hand. Peeking under it briefly to see a blooming of red through my sleeve as blood dribbles down my arm and to the crook of my elbow.

I grit my teeth together as I drop my arm and run again, the red hot pain searing through my ankle and up my calf muscles into my thigh. My arm will heal, but running on an injury like this? I risk it healing this way. Another cry breaks through the air, making me snap into focus. The masculine voice roars in fury, less of a cry the more I listen and more of a warning of what is going to happen.

My skin goose bumps when I determine how close I am. No more than one hundred ahead of me are bodies fighting around a smoky flame that has lost control, burning into the treeline to the right. "Dragons," Teiran says behind me, making me freeze as I look over my shoulder at him.

"I thought you weren't coming?" I snap at him and he shrugs.

"You may be my only chance at getting what I want. What better way to prove I am on your side than to fight next to you?"

I open my mouth to answer but before the words can even be formed, my attention is drawn to a scent mingling with the flame and my heart stutters.

"HAYES!" I hear Marcos roar, "Behind you!"

My eyes find him like a moth to the

light and I take a step forward, my lycan calling me to him. He can't get down intime, his body remains upright as he parries and throws razor-sharp claws with his opponent oblivious to everything around him. At that moment, a blistering blue light whistles in the throat of a smaller squatty dragon. His sights set on my mate's back.

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Chapter 165

Hayes

I spin around as Marcos screams, my eyes growing wide as heat barrels down at me. Instinct tells me to dive, but that deep-seated self hatred grips me, keeping me in place.

I slip my eyes closed, ready to take the full brunt of the flames as my left crunches, a heavy force hammering into me with a growl. The air squeezes from my lungs as I am slammed to the ground roughly, my head bouncing off the soft forest ground. My lycan lets go, releasing me back to my human form as I look up into the eyes of an annoyed redhead. She shoves off of me, a glare pinning me to my spot as I try to get up. Kyra shoves her foot into my chest, pushing me back down to the ground. "You are a liability. Stay the hell down." She hisses before she turns and rushes to help Marcos.

My eyes are glued to her, watching as she uses his body as he falls to his knees, ready to take a hit to the face. Her thin figure leaps up from him, her torso falling back as she approaches legs first, hooking her legs around the asshole's neck.

Kyra's claws come out as she crunches up, taking hold of his neck with both hands and then slips her hand over his jugular on her way to his back. He stumbles, gurgling before he tumbles forward with her on his neck, as if she were at a concert with him trying to get a better look at the artist. Just before he hits, her feet touch the ground, and she runs forward again.

I roll to my belly, forcing myself up and ignoring the pain of the first fight I nearly lost saving Marcos. These dragons are tough assholes, with thick hides and thicker skulls. Marcos stumbles forward, his body battered as I make my way to him, watching Kyra. Or at least a double who looks like Kyra.

"Holy shit. She was holding out on us," Marcos breathes.

"How many were there?" I ask him, counting the bodies on the ground around us, panic rising. "When we showed up, how many were there, Marcos?"

"Five." He says with certainty.

I scan around, seeing only three bodies on the ground and yet, when I count, looks like there are four people fighting.

Kyra lets out a pained cry, her arm folding over her stomach as she takes measured steps around a man twice her size. I lunge toward her, stepping in front of her as the asshole shifts into his dragon form, tearing bared as he growls, shaking the earth beneath our feet. "Why are you so hell bent on dying?" She grits, yanking at my arm as she drags me in the opposite direction. I scan around, looking for anywhere we can hide from the heat that is about to consume us, but there is nothing but the two men fighting in front of us. "TEIRAN!" she screams out.

One man spins, and in the blink of an eye, he sprints toward us, leaping just feet away before he transforms into an enormous beast, breaking trees with his sheer size. Heat erupts around us, Marcos being shoved at us by a massive black tail as I hug Kyra close to my chest and drop down, protecting her.

Her fingers curl into my chest, her forehead pressed to my bare skin, and I feel a sense of calm wash over me. It's as if being near her has revitalized me as my lycan awakes again, ready to fight and not a thought of death on his mind. Kyra being this close to danger again because of me is enough to make me want to tear out my heart. [SEARCH THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS CHAPTERS OF NOVELS EARLY AND IN THE HIGHEST QUALITY.](#)

The moment the heat subsides, I turn to watch the dragon take human form and stand between us and our enemy.

"Enough of this," He demands. "You are not here on the king's orders, you are exiled. I can smell it on you. Which means you have no reason to attack."

"As are you." One of them scoffs.

"We did not attack first." The other growls. "We didn't even use our dragon flame to start our fire to ensure we didn't draw other dragons."

Guilt seeps into me and I clear my throat, rising to my feet unwilling to let go of Kyra who wiggles in my arms for a half attempted escape. I look down at her, those deep eyes meeting mine as my stomach flutters. It would appear I fucked up, royally. Again. A ghost of a spark trickles through me where her fingers push gently and I yank back from her, shaking my head. "What happened?" Kyra asks, and I rub the back of my neck.

"We thought they had you," Marcos admits, a look of shame on his face.

"There was a scream, a feminine one." I swallow. "We felt they may be holding you and torturing you."

"Who was screaming?" The dragon who came to our aid asks the other two. They look at each other and then at the ground.

"We didn't hear anything." They mumble, but I can smell the lie a mile away as I scoff and shake my head. Not that I give a shit. Now that I know Kyra is safe, I couldn't care less about what they are doing in their spare time.

"Liars." Kyra says, looking fierce as

she steps up next to this new man she brought along with her. Marcos shoots me a curious look and I glance away, already annoyed that he is after my best friend. Well, old best friend. But what does this guy mean? Is he just one more person to vie for her attention?

"We don't answer to any of you, especially considering you just killed-"

"Speak true," the other dragon says. "Now, or we will just end you all and move on with our journey."

The two look at each other, whispering back and forth before one shoves the other in annoyance.

"Some guy gave us a girl to...spend time with in exchange for laying a trail." One of them finally says. Kyra's muscles stiffen and I watch her jawline as it flexes, and she looks away in sorrow. "And you used her until she died?" She grits out.

"No, she is alive, she just...escaped

because of these assholes." The stubbier one looks at me and Marcos, and suddenly I find I am pleased we found the wrong camp. Some poor girl is likely alive because of our mistake. And that is a mistake I can live with.

"What kind of trail?" I ask, stepping forward. "The kind someone with a dragon egg asked you to make?"

They look a little surprised before nodding.

"Yeah."

"When was this?" Kyra asks

"I don't know. The days bleed together out here." He shrugs. "But after the last heavy rain."

"Thank you. That was helpful." The dragon says before he reaches out and snaps one's neck with such force his head seems to only be held on via the flesh on the outside.

The other dragons sprint away, but I

lunge at him, catching his arm as it swings back. I yank hard, forcing his body forward and into my fist as his nose caves in and crunches under my knuckles. A shiver of delight runs through me as the scent of blood hits my nostrils.

"Wait!" Kyra cries out before I break his neck. I pause, looking up at her. "Where did the girl go?"

"Huh?" the assholes grumbles. I shake him roughly, make him whimper.

"Norff, fa bish wen norff." He slurs through his bloody lips as he tries to breathe.

She gives me a nod, and I quickly snap his neck, dropping his body to the ground before turning to the last remaining dragon. Whether he saved us or not, a dragon is an enemy, especially one who smiles at my girl like that. "And who the fuck is this guy?" I ask in unison with Marcos.

"Teiran. The exiled dragon prince." He answers, giving me a nod as I glare at him.

Of course she went and found a fucking prince.

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