

Traded To The Lycan King by MG Wattsons

Chapter 166

"Exiled or not, I don't trust you." I tell him plainly. He nods in understanding, looking over at Kyra, who gives him an arched brow and a smirk. What, they have inside jokes already?

"I told you." She says quietly, causing me to drag my tongue over my teeth, trying my hardest not to snap at them.

"Where did you come from?" Marcos asks, sounding just as annoyed as I feel. A small flutter of amusement floats through me as I look at Teiran for his answer.

"I live on the road." He shrugs, "I happened to be camping nearby-"

"He is searching for Ezra, too." Kyra says, cutting him off.

Teiran watches her closely but doesn't say anything to negate what she says as I narrow my eyes.

"So he is searching for the egg..." I say, leading them for more answers.

"Yes." He says, "But not for the reason you think. I have my own motives, but I assure you I want to work with you."

I recall the many times Colette would try to speak to me, fill me in on her stories about when she was saved from within the dragon's lair. She trusted Teiran once, the fallen heir who distrusted Giselle.

But that doesn't mean in these two years that his allegiance has changed completely. Where Colette found it easy to discern who to trust, I find I don't have it in me to even try it.

"You trust him?" I sigh, pinching the bridge of my nose between my eyes. My body is tired, weakened from sprinting and fighting and my mental guard is down from seeing her safe. "I think so." She says. I bark a soft laugh as I shake my head.

"I don't have it in me to argue with you right now."

"Uh, I don't trust him." Marcos chimes in, "Does my opinion matter for anything?"

"Not really." I tell him truthfully, shooting him a smirk as he rolls his eyes and throws his hands up in defeat.

"We can discuss it with Koda, Dean, and Nisha when we get back." I say, walking away, searching the ground for the remnants of some type of clothing.

"If we head back through my camp, I have extra pants." Teiran says before looking at Kyra. "And shirts."

I can't stop the growl as it rumbles through my chest. My protective eyes narrowed on him as he looks at me with a blank expression, but I swear I see a twitch at the corner of his lips.

"Lead the way." I give in. Deciding getting clothing on everyone is probably for the best. At least, for my sanity, when it comes to both Marcos and Teiran sneaking the occasional look at Kyra's smooth, toned body.

His camp isn't too far from where we were and I look around, wondering how the hell we missed this as we sprinted through the forest looking for Kyra. Was my fear for her that imminent that I couldn't even focus on searching clearly?

I mean, I had run right past her and what if she had needed me? What if Teiran had tried something and I just...sprinted past her as she needed me? I need to do better, be better if I want to keep her safe.

Teiran tosses me some gym shorts, dealing out clothing to the rest as I slip my feet through and tug them to my waist. I take a second to close my eyes and appreciate a pair of clothing that fits right. He grabs his bag, uttering a few words as the dim, smokeless, fire extinguishes.

"Ready?" He says looking around and I nod.

"You two walk ahead, I want to speak to Kyra." I say, pinning her in place with my scowl. She exhales, stalking toward me like a kid that got caught sneaking out at night.

"I don't really know where I am going." Teiran reminds me and Marcos puts his hand up to get attention.

"Yeah, I'm a little turned around." He says, grinning. I groan, clenching my jaw before I point in the direction our camp is, my eyes glowering at him.

"Just keep walking that way." I grit out. "We will be right behind you."

Marcos sneers but he does as he is

told, Teiran giving Kyra one last look before he drops his head and follows along with Marcos. Kyra takes two steps to follow them as my hand lifts, pressing into her toned stomach, her heat radiating through the fabric of her shirt, as I stop her.

"We need to stay close," she says, her gaze focused on my hand.

"Worried you won't be able to track them?" I ask, which earns me a scowl, her freckled face turning red as she grinds her teeth.

"What do you want to talk about?" She asks, reaching down and shoving my hand off of her as she takes a step, putting space between us. My body wants to move with hers, the draw of being near her taking over my senses as I stare at her. "You don't just find strangers and invite them to join us." I tell her, shaking my head, forcing the scent of her from my mind.

"Yeah, well, you don't exactly invite people you know well, either." She says, jutting her head to the side to nail home the sass she is giving me.

I chuckle, dragging my hand over my face. She is driving me completely nuts. One minute I am ready to end my life and the next...damn it, the next I am ready to live my life arguing with her just to see those cheeks grow pink.

"I don't trust him." I say, reminding myself to focus on the task at hand. Teiran, the big dragon dick who just wooed Kyra into letting him join us.

"Well I do," she shrugs.

"What, you find a hot dragon in the woods and suddenly you forget they are our enemy? They killed Tyler." Her eyes narrow and she drops her arms to her side, her tongue pressing to the side of her mouth as she chuckles quietly at my words.

"Go fuck yourself, Hayes." She says,

her voice soft, as if she is too tired to

argue. "Not every dragon is bad, just like not every lycan is good. I am choosing to trust him because we need him. How else do you intend to get the egg from Ezra? He beat your brother. Did you forget that?"

"Merikh gave it up!" I hiss at her. "You don't know what happened, clearly, because you act like he fought to the death for it. He gave the egg up-"

"For his mate. For Colette, the mother of his children." She scoffs, her brows pulling together. "Is that why you are mad at him? You blame him for choosing her?"

"The point is, I don't trust Teiran. Anything else we don't need to discuss?" I grumble.

"And I don't trust you." She says, looking me dead in the eye.

Anger burns at my throat, my fingers flexing as I look away from her and breathe deeply, trying to calm myself. She doesn't trust me? Of all the fucking people she can choose to trust, I am the one she doesn't trust? My lycan growl restless, annoyance trickling from him to me as I take a menacing step into her.

"You don't trust me?" I whisper, unable to control the anger in my voice.

"Not completely." She says, tilting her chin up to meet my glare.

"Is it because of how things ended between us years ago?" I ask, a shiver running through me as I reach out and touch her cheek.

Her hand reaches up, grabbing hold of my thumb as she drags it away from her face. Sparks tickle through my hand and I bite back a gasp.

"No, it's that I have had to save you twice now to keep you from dying."

I shrug, gripping onto her hand.

"Maybe I'm just a shitty fighter and swimmer?" I tease, and she frowns.

"I can't trust you with yourself. How can I trust you won't give up right before I need you?" She whispers. "Should I have to die because you don't care about living? Are we not worth living for?"

My heart is pounding loudly in my ears as I take my other hand and gently cup her cheek, those same sparks jumping out at me as my mouth falls open.

Mate. My mate. All feeling aside from awe and desire flees and all I can hear is my lycan whimpering in excitement.

"You might be worth living for..." I murmur, scanning every part of her face as if I am seeing her, truly, for the first time. Is she really mine? [SEARCH THE website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Chapter 167

Kyra

I scoff, giving Hayes' chest a gentle shove. How long have I waited for him to want me? How long did I grieve and now he thinks his words, his empty, useless words, are going to what? Make me swoon? My lycan craves him. Hell, all of me wants him. But I refuse to be

used again other than what my alpha has asked of me.

"Wow, you really know how to make a girl weak in the knees." I tell him, and he frowns.

His hand extends out like he might try to touch me again, but he stops, making a fist before he exhales and looks away.

"I'm not trying to make you weak in the knees." He says, his tone flat and expressionless.

"I don't want to be your reason to live, Hayes." I tell him honestly. "What I want is for you to stop almost getting yourself killed."

"Because you are worried about potentially dying if I don't try my hardest?" He asks.

I have lots of reasons why I don't want this dense beta to just stop trying and die. But what I also have is a little bit of pride and I refuse to tell him it is because I care about him. What I need is for him to keep his distance and stop touching me so I can think straight. "Something like that, now. Can we go?" I ask, motioning to where the other two have disappeared.

"No." He grits out. "I do not want that dragon in my camp."

"Then Teiran and I will go on our own." I shrug, as if leaving Hayes wouldn't be the hardest thing to do right now. Not when I can't trust that he won't just up and die.

"Over my dead body," He grinds out, taking a step toward me.

"Oh? See, so willing to die and unwilling to cooperate." I tut at him, waving my finger in his face as if telling him no. "Teiran and I are a package deal."

He roars in laughter, throwing his head back as if I have told him the funniest joke he has ever heard.

"You go where I go, end of conversation," he finally says after a few moments of shaking his head with an amused grin.

"Then I guess we are a trio." I smile at him sweetly.

"Kyra..." He growls low, his eyes meeting mine, all his emotions unmasked as he captures my full attention.

I swear I can see into his soul. The torment he lives in and the way he looks at me makes my mouth go dry. Instantly I am flushed, my lungs screaming for air and my heart so loud in my ears that when his mouth moves I can hear nothing but the pattering away. "W-what?" I ask, licking my dry lips as I blink and break from his intoxicating hold.

"You stay next to me. You will never be alone with him or anyone else. I say we can not trust. Is that understood?" His entire presence is intimidating, the glint in his eyes informing me he isn't messing around this time. So instead of provoking him anymore than I already have, I swallow roughly and nod my understanding.

He struts past me, looking over his shoulder when I don't follow closely, and he arches a brow.

"We are done talking now." He says, pausing when I don't move, standing frozen in silence. I have more things I want to say, things I want to do now that I see he is okay when earlier I was so damn worried. "Do you plan on fighting me the entire way?"

His shoulders slump a little, his intimidation tactic slowing as he turns around to face me.

"No. It is exhausting fighting with you." I admit. He smirks.

"So no more smart ass comments and bickering?" He asks, and I snort a laugh.

"Not a chance." I smile, a genuine one that makes my eyes squint as I walk to his side. He gives me a gentle elbow and I wince in pain, my shoulder still sore from that damn tree, but at least my ankle seems to be happier now.

"How badly did you hurt your arm?" He asks, concerned.

"It was a deep cut, but I also messed up my ankle, which seems to be healed already." I tell him, looking down at my dirt riddled leg, a shiver running through me. A shower would be extremely nice about now.

"It's healed already?" He asks, sounding shocked.

"Yep." I nod before I pull my bloody sleeve up and look at my bruised skin. A long pink jagged line runs through the deep purple and green bruise. "Looking much better here, too."

"Have you always healed this fast?" Hayes asks, tilting his head to the side in thought. I don't have the heart to tell him it is because I am near my second chance mate. That his presence is what is making my lycan work in overdrive to fix my injuries. "I don't think I have ever actually timed it," I chuckle, trying to brush it off and drop the subject.

"Mmm," He hums in thought, looking

at me curiously as we walk. The silence is almost worse than the talking of the looks he keeps giving me. The tension with just being close enough but yet too far away feels like it is tearing at the seams of my sanity.

I was hoping adding Teiran to the mix would at least get me time away from Hayes. Less time for this mate bond to grow stronger and more unbearable. The sex was a mistake, in every way possible only working against me emotionally and physically.

"Thank you." He whispers, after a long stretch, Teiran and Marcos now insight as they continually look back to keep tabs on us.

"For what? Agreeing to be nicer to you?" I tease, trying to break the tension. Hayes shakes his head and exhales through his pursed lips.

"No, for saving me." He says and I squawk in shock and dry chuckle breaking from my lips.

"Well, I'll be damned. Mr. 'Let me die' is happy I saved him?"

He glares at me. [SEARCH THE website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"I just said thank you. Let's not get too carried away." He grumbles.

"Okay, okay." I say, smiling. "I suppose I can take it for what it is. And you are welcome, Hayes. It was my pleasure to be your knight in shining armor."

He laughs lightly, shaking his head.

"More like chaos in freckles,"

"You can make jabs all you want, but you can't take this win from me," I beam at him, the tension evaporating and the pressure of trying to keep a wall up falling away.

This feels like home, like how things were before the world went to hell and our souls were tattered. The fun little banter that wasn't meant to sting or hurt, but bring laughter and lightness to the air.

"Yeah, yeah." He grins, rubbing the back of his neck before he pauses and lowers his hand, looking at it as if he forgot he was disfigured. His demeanor changes in a heartbeat, the smile wiped from his face and he clears his throat.

"It's good to know you are still in there." I say, giving him an encouraging smile. And I mean it, seeing him like this a breath of fresh air, "Even if you look like a mess on the outside."

He blinks at me as I toss him a wink and that childlike shimmer in his eyes comes back for a moment.

"Kind of a dick move to call someone disfigured a mess," he says as I shrug, unmarred by his words.

"Friends are honest with each other." I remind him and he slows down. A look of disbelief and hope morphing his face to something softer, less harsh, even with his scars.

"You think we are friends?" He asks, his voice a hoarse whisper.

"If we are going to be next to each other until all of this is over, it will be easier to be friends." Tell him. His eyes narrow and his lips press together in thought.

"So we are only friends for now, for the sake of this mission?" He asks, sounding disappointed.

"No." I exhale. "We can be real friends. Friends with barriers." and walls, and tall barricaded gates that keep me from touching him. He blinks slowly and then moves a step closer, his hand brushing mine as we walk for a minute. "Are you friend zoning me, Kyra?" He asks, as we approach the bickering Marcos and Teiran in front of us.

"Hell yes I am," I say, flashing him a victorious smile. "And there is nothing you can do about it."

He frowns, his mouth falling open like he might protest, but he thinks better about it and closes his mouth. Then he grabs my hand, forcing me to stop as the sparks from the mate bond dance over my skin, forcing a shudder from my body. "Not even when I do this?" He whispers, his thumb stroking over the top of my hand as he gazes into my eyes so intensely I am forced to look away.

"Especially when you do that," I say, extracting my hand from his. "Friends don't hold hands."

"Even when there is something there?" He asks, seeming almost frantic.

"Like what?"

"Sparks?" He whispers, licking his lips. "The kind that are life changing. Do you feel anything?"

My skin goosebumps, the air

growing thin as I feel like I might

faint. Is he saying that he feels them too? Does Hayes finally feel the mate bond? My chest rises and falls and + clear my throat and glance around, rubbing my sweat palms over my shirt.

"Sparks? No." I lie looking him right in the eyes. "Uncomfortable, yes."

Chapter 168

Everyone sits and stares at Teiran, Nisha's eyes sizing him up with unbridled curiosity. Dean clears his throat, waiting for Hayes to say something, anything. But he doesn't. Instead, he stands and turns to walk away. "Hayes," Koda hisses, causing Hayes to stop, look over his shoulder uninterested, and then he walks off.

"I'll take the first watch," he mutters.

"I am Teiran." The dragon heir says. Nisha slaps at Koda, her eyes wide.

"I told you he looks familiar," she hisses at him.

"And how do you know him?" He asks, sounding bored.

"He is the dragon king's kid." She grits out. Koda sits up straighter, his mouth falling open as he looks at me, a grimace on my face as I try to hide my face.

"He is what?" Dean screeches.

"Calm down, they exiled him," Marcos says in Teiran's defense and I feel a twitch at my lip, amused that suddenly Marcos is defending him, even if it is minimal. "Disowned really."

"That doesn't matter," Koda scoffs. "If he looks like a dragon and smells like a dragon, then he is the enemy."

"Do I look like a dragon just sitting here?" Teiran asks, and Koda frowns.

"He means you are big," Nisha tries to explain.

"He is here because I asked him to help us." I say, cutting the chit chat short. "Yes, he is the dragon king's son, yes he was exiled and yes, I do trust him. At least enough to trust that we are not his enemy." "Did you stop to consider that maybe he is our enemy?" Koda groans. "And Hayes agreed to this?"

He suddenly stands, throwing his hands up in anger before he chuckles to himself and he sneers at me.

"Yes, Hayes agreed. Teiran and I saved Hayes and Marcos. He had no problem killing his own kind to keep us safe." I snap at him as I jump up too, rolling my shoulders back.

"You two saved Marcos and Hayes?" Nisha repeats, her tone mocking as she rolls her eyes.

"Yes." Teiran interjects. "It seems your leader has a desire for death,"

Everyone falls silent. Dean looks down at his hands and Koda looks away, clearing his throat. We all know about Hayes' wish for death, the oath his brother made him take. There is no room for arguing with anyone about that. "I'm going to go sit with Hayes," Dean says, getting up and walking off.

"Teiran, you should get some rest." I give him a half smile and he nods, clearing his throat before he lays down, and turns his back to the flames.

"Looks like you have a pet dog," Nisha teases, a giddy grin on her face as she looks at an angry Koda who scowls at me.

"I am no one's pet, and I am least of all a dog." Teiran bites out from his spot.

"Enough." I exhale, my fingers pinching the bridge of my nose. The last thing I need is more arguing over moot points. My body is exhausted and muscles are sore. "I am going to get some sleep while I can."

I find a spot near the fire, my body shivering as I lay in the dewy grass, the moisture leaching through my clothing. Sleep, like always, eludes me no matter how long I lay counting the breaths. I roll onto my back, my hand over my stomach as I watch the stars. Hayes had to feel it. Why else would he bring up sparks, and them being important? I shouldn't have denied it, but the fear of what he will do if I say yes made it feel impossible to say anything else. Would he have denied me on the spot, or would it be saving his life to admit it and ask him to accept me?

Not that I want him to. He is kind of a pompous ass who brings out the bitter, kind of annoying, bitchy part of me. But he is Hayes, my Hayes. The same guy who would make even the darkest days feel like there was light. He could take any terrible ordeal and use his words to make me think about it differently.

Hayes made me a good person. No, he made me want to be a better person, even after I left, hell even after meeting Tyler. I would remind myself to think objectively like Hayes would and yet, when I am around him, it is hard to think at all aside from wanting to smack him or kiss him silly.

I groan quietly, pressing my palms to

the lids of my eyes. Why did everything have to spiral out of control when I need it the most? My stupid, bond driven lycan wants to be curted up with Hayes, to be accepted. But Hayes and I...we are not in the place to love anyone. More so him than me, and the last thing we need is a sex driven

situationship.

"Can't sleep?" I hear a soft whisper and look around my hands to see the outline of Hayes as he takes a seat next to me.

"Not uncommon," I admit, and he nods.

"Yeah, I know the feeling. Might be part of why I am such an asshole." He gives me a soft grin and I chuckle.

"Or that could just be natural?" I tease.

Hayes' lips twitch, catching my attention, my heart racing at just being next to him. Down, lycan, down. Last thing I need is to get caught staring at his plush, upturned kissable lips. He might get the fight idea. That I want to smash my lips to his and leap into his arms. I don't want sex; I don't want to be

marked...I want to be loved. By him.

"How can I help you sleep?" He asks, reaching out a hand to help me sit up.

"Have a spare mattress with fluffy blankets in any of these bags?" I ask him with an arched brow.

"You know, funny you should mention that..." He grins widely, hooking his thumb over his shoulder like he might actually try to play it off like he has one.

"Oh shut up," I roll my eyes, a laugh tumbling from my lips as I shake my head, playing with my fingers. My stomach is fluttering and my cheeks feel red. It feels like I am a teenager all over again, flirting with the boy I like. Ironically, it's the same damn boy. "You could always use me," He winks and I frown at him before I look away and tuck my hair behind my ear.

"I didn't mean like... That came out wrong." He scrambles to fix what he said, but I realize he is struggling between his two personalities. The one I knew and loved and the current broken and angry version.

"It's fine Hayes." I mutter before I clear my throat. "Don't take this the wrong way. Sometimes I enjoy picking on you and bickering, but can we keep the sexual things to a minimum?"

"Of course," he says, looking away.

The fire highlights his cheeks, showcasing the smooth burns that weave over his skin, up his neck and to his cheek and temple. The shadows play in the grooves of where his

skin will never heal and I can't help but need to touch it, to make it feel better even if he can feel nothing there.

I rise onto my knees, leaning forward as my fingers gingerly reach out and touch his delicate skin. He stiffens, his muscles working in his neck and jaw as they clench.

Hayes doesn't stop me as I inch closer, getting a better look, tilting my head from side to side as I trace a muscle line down his cheek, across his chin and down toward his collarbone. The normal skin around it goosebumps with my touch as I slip my hand over his cheek and turn him to face me. Our eyes meet, my breathing hitches.

There he is. This beautiful man is

both broken and perfect at the same time. A soul that I wanted

desperately to match mine now finally fit. I don't know how I know it, but I can sense it. A wave of

There is no letting him reject me. I won't survive it. Just like I won't survive him killing himself.

understanding washing over CEL

"Grossed out?" He breathes, but I know he is sensing a shift between us too, something bigger than the quick sex. This is more intimate, life changing.

"You are so handsome." I tell him truthfully. "Scars and all. So perfect."

His chest heaves up and down as he watches me close before he reaches up and takes my hand from his face. He lifts my palm to his lips, pressing a soft kiss there before giving me a sad smile.

"You are a much better liar than you used to be," He murmurs. "Try to get some sleep."

Then he clears his throat before he stands. "When you feel those sparks, let me know so we can take care of them."

Chapter 169

Hayes

Dean frowns, a heavy sigh escaping him as he places his hands on his hips and weighs what I have told him.

"And you think it's a good idea?" He asks, finally looking up.

"No, but I think it's our best option." I admit. "Is it ideal? No, not at all, but I'm trusting my instincts here."

He smirks, his cheek dimpling as he tries to hold back a chuckle.

"Forgive me for saying this, Hayes, but since I have known you, all your instincts have done is find us in fights, almost dying."

"That was anger. This is logic. It's obvious that what we have been doing isn't working, so we need to pivot. Find a better angle, a better plan, and I think this is the way to go." I admit. "Look, I know trust is hard past a certain extent with me. But if you could just afford me a little grace here, it would help—"

"I trust you." He says, cutting me off, the skin around his eyes wrinkling as his brows furrow. "What I need to know is that you can trust yourself."

My lips press together, and I look away, my gaze drifting to Kyra where she stands and stretches as the others wake everyone up. Can I trust myself when I don't even know what the hell to do about her? About this disgusting spring of hope flowing in my gut? I want her; I want a life with her, all the while knowing I deserve no such thing and I can't ever have it.

"That will be something I have to figure out along the way."

"Hmm," Dean mulls in thought, and I cross my arms over my chest, watching him.

"Hmm what?" I ask, and he looks at the others.

"You should at least take Marcos with you." He exhales. "Four is better than one."

"Marcos is a great fighter, but he will only cause tension. We already have tons of that with taking the dragon with us."

"Yo! You guys ready?" Koda hollers over to us. I give Dean a firm nod and he gives me a weak smile.

"Well, I guess if all goes well, we will see you soon enough." He reaches out for my hand as I slap mine into his, seizing it in a firm grip.

"You will see me soon. Just make sure you stick to the plan, okay? No letting people wander off and search for us." I say firmly. "Marcos will not follow you guys."

"Good. When you see my brother..." I pause, swallowing the roughness in my throat, "Tell him I hope to see him soon."

His eyes widen, but instead of asking questions, he nods his head.

"Sure thing."

I reach down near my feet, swooping up two bags, mine and the one I prepared for Kyra. As I stride over to her, my heart thuds like a drum before going into war. I am putting my faith in her and her dragon friend to find Ezra and get what we need. Knowing what I know now, I realize that the mission of just simply finding the egg is truly just the beginning of the journey. Search the Find_Novel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"You two come with me." I say, walking past them and into the woods.

Dean calls the others with him, the two of us agreeing it would be much faster with a lot less bitching if we just separate and explain to our group the plan. Kyra and Teiran don't utter a word, the two just following until we have walked far enough that Kyra clearly grows curious as she slides up next to me. My lip twitches up into a soft smile, a weird sense of excitement growing in my stomach.

"Yes?" I say, feigning annoyance.

"Just curious what the plan is." She shrugs like she isn't interested.

"We walk this way until you pick up a scent or see something." I shrug and she cranes her head to look at me.

"And the others are hanging out at camp?" She asks, her eyes narrowing as she picks on the fact I am not being exactly forthcoming with all the information I have.

I come to a stop, turning to face her as Teiran walks up to us.

"We will find Ezra on our own from

now on. The others have gone to inform Merikh and Colette of who

we have found and hopefully semet

what they think of our

new..parasite." I say, looking right at him.

Teiran seems amused by my comment, but he says nothing, only nodding his understanding.

"You think that all of us will be able to take on Ezra?" She asks, shocked.

"No. I think Teiran and I will be able to take him on while you get the egg."

She scoffs, looking away before she looks at the ground, her tongue pressing against her inner cheek as she tries to find patience.

"You want me to steal the egg and run off and leave you two to fight a Fae?"

"I have fought many Fae." Teiran says, his tone flat and unoffended.

"See? Between the two of us, one has fought fae before. It will be fine." I tease her and she glares at me, then her tongue darts out and licks her lip, wetting the plump rosy flesh. My lycan stirs, wanting to come forward and take her and yank her to me and claim her. But that's not something we will do, or can do.

"Hah, Hah." She barks out a fake laugh. "So happy you found a sense of humor now."

"You are the one who wanted to split up. This was kind of your idea if you think about it."

"Great. You get yourself killed and I get the blame for it. How quant for me." She mutters, stalking off.

"How does this plan mean he will die?" Teiran asks, giving me a bemused look before following after her.

"I need quiet, Teiran, if I am supposed to be finding a trail." She hollers up to the sky, so she doesn't have to look at us.

"Probably shouldn't be yelling then." I call out to her and I hear her grunt before she shoots me an annoyed scowl.

"I liked you better when you were mean." She hisses, then turns around, stepping to the left and into the trees.

"She said she didn't get much sleep last night. I assume that is where this temper comes from," Terian says, his eyes wide, looking a little shocked by her change in mood. "That and she is hungry. And thirsty." I exhale.

"Mmm, the trifecta." He muses. "Do we have anything for her?"

"Yes. I do." I say, holding up the spare bag I packed especially for her.

"Do you plan to give it to her?" He asks, quirking a brow. "Or are you going to wait for her to realize she needs a snack?"

I snort, shouldering both straps to our bags and pat them gently with a grin on my face.

"She's a big girl. She can tell us when she is hungry or needs a drink." Then I walk with him chuckling behind me.

"One would think you two are in love." Teiran says more to himself than to me, so I don't respond. I don't dare hope to think love can exist between Kyra and me again.

This mate bond is here, thriving and

Her

pulling me in but I know all too well that a mate bond isn't instant love. That is part of my pain over Leandra. Knowing her, wanting her but yet having the chance to truly love the way she deserved. And giving that opportunity to anyone else... it feels like a dishonor to her memory.

"Hey!" Kyra hisses under her breath, breaking through my inner thoughts, snapping her fingers frantically. "Get over here. I found blood."

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