

Traded To The Lycan King by MG Wattsons

Chapter 94-98

Chapter 94

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“It is not life threatening. I don’t think. Just painful. He admits didn’t see him sneaking up on me

“Yeah, well, it was chaotic, and they got me good, too? I give him reassuring smile. “It was highly unlikely we would all make it out of here uninjured”

Caspian sorts and mods his head in agreement

“If we are lucky, we will all make it out of here alive” He amending statement.

“I have no intention of losing anyone, Caspian” I tell him. “Not I can help it”

“That is comforting” He smirks.

“How long do we have to stay here?” Percy asks, pacing as if he is looking for his next hit.

He has been on edge since he joined us, but this is a whole new level of it. Percy looks like he may take off on his own one moment or break down in tears the next. He is struggling hard, but I need him to focus. We all need to be one step ahead

this time.

“Sit down, Percy” I insist. He physically frowns, his nose scrunching as he follows my command, but not terribly willingly.

“Are you sure she said to stay here and wait for her?” He asks, his knee popping up and down as he lifts his bloodied hands and behind to chew on his nails.

“Percy,” I say sternly, commanding his attention as he seems to snap out of his mind and looks at me. “Are you questioning me?”

His eyes grow wide and he swallows roughly as he shakes his head no.

“We will be fighting again soon enough, Pere. You just need to be patient.” Hayes assures him and Percy drags his hands through his hair, his face looking away.

“Are you sure it was even Colette?” Hayes asks, sitting next to me I frown at him and he gives me a pitiful look. “It’s a fair question and you know it.”

He has a point, and I hate that I never even took the time to consider it. Lily has gotten in Colette’s head before using her memories to distort her dreams. Granted, that is a usual practice of dream walkers, but who is to say Lily hasn’t twisted the magic she uses? What keeps her from doing what she wants when laws and order mean nothing to her now?

But when I recall the sound of her voice in my head, the way she felt like her. It was more than just someone in my head using her against me. It was the full bond, the way I could feel her, and I knew she could feel me. The way I still feel her now, even with this distance. It’s a nagging in the back of my brain that screams, this is real.

“It is Colette, I am certain” I say, giving him an annoyed look.

“Unless it is Colette being controlled.” Caspian offers, and I scoff

“I am willing to bet my life that she is in control of her own mind and actions and that it is her” I tell them emphatically.

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“There is nothing I know better than Colette in this world.”

“I say we send out one of us to go lurk around,” Percy says. Hayes laughs and shakes his head and I look at Leandra, who seems distant sitting across from us, her knees tucked to her chest with her arms wrapped tightly around them.

“And I suppose you want to volunteer as tribute, huh?” Hayes asks Percy.

“I am the best option.” He says matter of fact. Their quibble fades to the background as I reach out to Colette, just needing to hear her voice again. That reassurance she is safe, for real. My lycan stirs, whining as we wait for her response, even though we can feel that she is able to hear and process what I want from her.

-Soon—She says, her words echoing in my mind as my eyes fall closed and a smile flashes over my lips. My heart races at her voice, my stomach knotting as if I am a fool waiting outside the princesses tower for her to run away with him.

-Not soon enough—I tell her and she chuckles.

-Prince Teiran is getting things prepared for our escape. It won't be long, only a few hours.— she says.

-Are you sure you trust him?— I ask her and I feel her hesitation,

-Trust is a strong word. But I have faith his hatred for Giselle will win out against anything else. He will come through.— She says and I frown.

I would prefer to be doing this with some trusted individual who wasn't a prince of the species holding my mate captive and torturing her. But I guess beggars can't be choosers.

Did you find her?— She asks, her voice soft, broken, and I know immediately she is referring to Penny.

-We did,— I tell her,-Percy is, of course, taking it hard.—

“You are talking to her right now, aren't you?” Percy asks, leaning forward.
“Does that mean it is time to go? I'm ready.”

“It is not go time yet,” I tell him, pressing my lips together.

-They came out of nowhere—She whispers, remembering it all.

-We can talk about this in person, so I can hold you while you mourn her—I breathe and I can hear her quiet hum of approval.—Any news of what you need from us next?—

-Merikh they know you are here. They knew it the second you hit their lands. What I need from you is a distraction-

I look at Percy, who seems incapable of sitting still. The over at Hayes, who is holding onto Leandra's hand even if she tries to take it away. It's obvious she enjoys clinging to him, but she clearly is uncomfortable with the affection. Then I glance at Caspian, who watches me with curious eyes.

-I think we can manage a distraction. How big?— I ask her.

I can feel a tingle of amusement through the link.

-As big as your love for me?— She asks, and I chuckle to myself.

-I hope you are prepared-

-I will be in touch soon—She says suddenly before I feel her just out of reach.

I press my head to the back of the crumbling rocks and exhale, dragging my hand over my face before looking down and checking out my leg. The burn is still as angry as it was before and I frown at it, confused why it hasn't healed yet.

“True dragon burns don't heal quickly.” Leandra says softly. “We learned that quickly while being here,

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“They used to hurt you?” Hayes asks, his rage unmistakable. She shakes her head.

“Yes, and no.” She shrugs before her cheeks grow pink in embarrassment. “It’s complicated. Most of the dragons aren’t awful. They don’t like us much, but they aren’t all violent and mean.”

Which means some of them are.”

“Hayes, now is not the time.” I say, pushing myself up to stand. Right now, we need to plan a distraction. Which means we need a plan

“What kind of distraction?” Percy asks, sitting forward, excited.

“The kind that brings all the heat our way.” I say. “Though it was requested, we make it as big as we can get it.”

“Explosion?” Percy asks, fully invested in the destruction of anything pertaining to the people who killed Penny.

“They are dragons, Percy. An explosion is common for them.” I say, my brows knitting together in thought. “We need all of their attention on us.”

“With my injury, I can only muster a flood.”

I think of the travels here, the way the jungle was so full of life and water, humidity, everything Caspian needed to be in his best shape. Then we entered this fiery pit and he can barely heal. Then it strikes me.

“Would it be easier if you could divert a river or water source this way?” I ask him and he tilts his head, his eyes closing as he seems to be in heavy concentration.

“Percy, you and I will march straight to the entrance of their little castle, and cause a little scene.” I say, a plan forming in my mind, and Percy stands, rubbing his hands in excitement.

“Hell yes. I am all for this.”

“There is a body of water. I can divert this way.” Caspian says, “Though it would be easier to do if I were in the water source? “And what the hell do we do?” Hayes scoffs. “I refuse to stand aside and do nothing.”

“Oh, I have a job for you, too.” I grin at him and he arches a brow curiously.

"You are going to give Caspian a ride to the water, and Leandra will go with you." I say, trying not to laugh.

"Oh, fucking great. I'm a pony boy now," he grumbles.

"Once you get him there, I want you to hustle your ass to me and Percy. We will have literal hell fire raining down on us."

"And how do we get out?" Leandra asks.

"Good question." I say, avoiding giving her an answer I don't quite have yet. "Anyone else have any?"

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The would launch his own version of a resin. Well, more like he would continue his rescue, which is already sabotagest f pull my hands through my hair, shipping it into a high hum to keep my neck from itching Teiran needs to hurry his ass op

therwise shut is going to go sideways so fast

The door handle niggles and then swings partially open before drops. I wait cautiously for Terlan to push into the room, inching closer as listen for anything out of sorts, but all I hear the sound of retreating footsteps and then nothing. My shaky hand waches out for the door, pulling it open with an ee creaking before I slip my head out,

There is not a soul in the corridor, not even the sound of anyone in the distance, and I know that this is my chance. Teiran had to have sent someone, or it's a trap. Either way, I have to take the risk and hope for the best. My mother is relying on me, as are my mate and those with him.

“Shit” I mutter, wiping my sweating palms on my jeans before tiptoe out of the room.

My heart is pounding in my chest, making my lungs ache, but force the pain and emotions aside, I can do this, I just have to figure out how I can do it. This place is a dam maze and a fortress. The only way I can think to get back to my mom is to follow the stilling heat and dry air.

The only issue is how I make it all the way down there before getting seen or caught.

My back is pressed to the cool stones. As I peek around a corner when I see no one, I scurry across and speed my way down deeper. Then I feel it, the water calling to me.

The pounding of it on the mountain rock and the way the water in the air fuels my strength. I need a way down and a way out. One where I won't be seen or followed. I need to jump.

I sprint down the hall, drawing closer to the water that hammers down like a beat on a drum, begging for me to come to it. It is like my soul knows where I need to be, what I need to do, and it listens.

“Stop!” I hear someone calling out, but I don't take the time to discover who, or rather what, is calling for me as I throw myself forward and the water dances over me with a thunderous power.

The world beneath me falls away into the white rustling of water and rocks as I trust the water to guide me. It seems like I fall for forever, my heart in my throat and my muscles tensed in fear of what I may actually find at the bottom. I hit something hard; the wind knocking from my lungs with a grunt and suddenly my body burns under me and I'm ripped from the water on the back of a massive beast.

Fear rips through me as I gasp and try to force myself to stand in search of a way off. The dragon growls deep in its chest, making the whole of its back shake as if an earthquake were shaking the earth. I stumble onto my knees, holding on tight as it turns and dives straight for the earth.

I can feel that pull of the mate bond where Merikh tries to break through to me, no doubt feeling my erratic emotions in spades. I keep him from breaking in knowing that right now I have nothing to say to him, no news that will keep

him safe at the moment. So instead I go with the gut instinct to cling to the scales of the massive beast, holding on with every ounce of strength I have.

I pinch my eyes closed as we speed down toward the ground, bracing for an impact that never comes. After a second I force one eye open and I gape at the way the earth consumes us, steam and waves of heat rolling toward us until its wings extend, catching the air with a whistling speed as we slow. It ducks down, sliding into the very area Terian had led me out of once before, explaining it was for a dragon's entrance.

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I slip off the side, thudding in the cement ground on my ass and wincing before I stand. The beast looks at me before shaking its head and suddenly a cloud of embers ignites and shrinks before me, revealing Terian, bloody and bruised.

"Why the fuck did you jump off of the fucking cliff into the waterfall?" He hisses.

"Where the hell else was I supposed to go?" I scoff at him, looking around to make sure no one is coming.

"I was fucking calling for you as you ran away." He grits out in anger, stepping closer to me. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a set of silver cuffs.

My eyes grow wide as I stare at

"You were hours late," I remind him. "I assumed shit went sideways, and I was improvising"

"Just put those on," He murmurs, his eyes scanning everywhere as he hands them to me and I glance at them.

"Why?" I ask skeptically.

“Because I need to use you to get in the dungeon to get your mother out.” He grits out through his teeth. “I get that trust is hard, but I am a dragon of my word. I will get you out of here.”

I swipe the cuffs from him, hissing as it burns my skin, and I place them on.

“Good enough?” I ask, showing him the slightly loose cuffs, and he nods.

“Works for me. Let’s go.”

He places his hand on my back, pushing me along. We make it to the first door and knock, waiting for someone to answer. They seem shocked to see him roughed up, but they don’t question him as he shoves me through the door. And down the massive dark hallway.

A few guards pass us, bowing their heads to him in respect before turning to each other and clearly discussing his appearance.

“Is that why you were so late?” I ask him, looking over my shoulder.

His stoic eyes meet mine and then he looks forward, like he has no intention of sharing what happened with me.

“Are your people ready?” He whispers after passing another guard, who stops and watches us suspiciously. “Yes,” I whisper back.

“Good.” he seems relieved. “It’s time for them to make their move.”

-Merikh—I call through the mindlink, waiting for his response.

-Tell me you are ready and safe—He says, sounding relieved.

-I am safe, for now. It’s time—I tell him.

-Well, that is good, as we have already started. I couldn’t reach you, so I may have expedited the plan-

I smirk to myself, shaking my head. Of course Merikh didn’t wait, I should have expected as much. I love him for his impulsiveness just as much as it frustrates me.

-Be safe—I tell him and I can feel his confirmation before he blocks me to focus on what he is doing.

Teiran takes me to the same cell area and my breathing hitches when I see Jennifer there, returning my mom from a torture session. She berates her as she whimpers and suddenly she delivers a hard kick to her chest and I feel my heart explode with a rage I can't control.

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"Leave her alone!" I scream at her and she spins to see me, surprise on her face before it morphs into a vicious grin.

"I guess the king didn't find you as special as Giselle thought he would, huh?" She teases and I lick my teeth, trying to remember I am supposed to be captured.

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"He feels she is a threat, not that I disagree," Teiran says, sounding bored and suddenly Jennifer breaks into a fit of laughter.

"Oh, shit," she cackles, slapping her hand on her thigh in giddy excitement. "Who fucked you up?" This is property © NôvelDrama.Org.

She steps closer, reaching out with her hands still soaked in my mother's blood to touch his cheek. I watch as he shies away from her touch and she smirks.

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"It was your dear old dad, wasn't it? That's why you didn't fight back. Your hands are clean, not abrasions. Man, you are lucky he didn't kill you this time for your constant fucking up." She sighs before she slides her hand down his bruised cheek and waves a cheeky goodbye.

I watch him as he pretends to open the cage and check the coast is clear. Then he moves to the cage where my mother is and opens it, lifting her as she cries out in pain softly, her eyes swollen shut and her collarbone is

bruised and bloody. My heart sinks as I tear the loose cuffs off and touch her hand, leaning forward.

“It’s okay, mom, I’m getting you out of here. I promise.” I whisper, then I look at Teiran. “Now what?” I ask him

He looks around, and then he presses his lips together. “Now we wait.” He says calmly.

“For what?” I ask, growing irate and nervous. “The healer.” He says simply. “We need him too.”

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The heater has been at least nice each time and the cominent abjur knowing ine when I wax postinger has sinck in my head and let me with burning questions only he can answer. The onlgique I foresee now is we have an unconscious afphe female and a coppled old healer I have to somehow get out

Let’s move. Ibiran says, when he notices I am not following along “You must stay close or I can not protect you.”

I scurry to keep up with his long steps and as we come close to the corner, I hear the distinct hobble of the man we have been waiting for. Teiran says nothing as he rushes forward, laying my mother down on a metal topped rolling cart. The healet bumbles around for a moment, the clinking of glasses as he rustles through his jars before a hum of excitement echoes off the wall.

“Hold her trouth open,” He says, looking up at my dragon partner in crime who pinches my mother’s checks and pries her bruised jaw open.

“Careful,” I hiss at him, but both of them ignore me, the healer incorking the bottle as he pours it down my mom’s throat. “What the hell is that? What are you doing to her?”

“How long?” Teiran asks him and the healer presses his lips together, his fingers touching her neck and feeling for a heartbeat. After a moment, she grows more pale, and he nods at us.

“It’s time.” Then he flings open his little metal doors and Teiran grabs me, dragging me forward as I try to sink my feet into the cement to stop him.

“Woah, woah, this wasn’t part of the plan,” I say, putting my hands up.

“It’s too late for the original plan. This is called improvising.” He says, giving me a serious look that says this is happening

whether I like it or not.

“Maybe you should tell me what we are improvising, you know, just for shits and giggles?” I ask as he frowns, his hand on the back of my head.

“The primary goal has not changed. I get you all out alive. This is where that trust comes into play.” He reminds me and I

groan.

“Yeah, trust is hard to come by in a fucking dungeon, as I’m being shoved in a tiny metal cabinet on wheels.” I mutter, forcing my body to bend in ways that are not even remotely comfortable.

“Your mother will get us out of here the back way.”

I narrow my eyes at him. “Used how, exactly?”

He blinks at me before he slams the metal doors shut with a loud echo, closing me in the darkness until my eyes adjust and a tiny sliver of light makes its way into my current tiny prison. It doesn’t take long before the cart rolls; the wheels creaking and crashing over tiny bumps that inflict more pain than I’d like to admit.

Teiran,” I hear someone say in a greeting before a pause, “Well shit, what do we have here?”

“The wolf.” Teiran says, an air of boredom in his voice.

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by the whiny bokeh Ibiran says, “I need the deall La

hon is the clinking of what womits like keys before the liver of light disappears and I find my heart racing in fear af ping cough. Then I hear a heavy sigh and shift on the table before the whole cart shakes and I have to press into the wait to steady myself thin rolling out.

Well it’s a good thing you are getting the body out while it’s still limp. Dogs sinell as it is, but a dead dog after it bloats up?” The guard scolt, “That’s a nasty smell.”

Bde rising in my throat at the thought of my mom being dead, he was alive when Teiran picked her up and placed her on the can. And alive when the healer poured that substance down her throat. It is obvious they gave her something, but what they gave her. I do not know.

“ATTACK” a voice booms through the hallways, carrying down each stony wall as if the voice were more than the mere echo it is. “All dragons to the main gate!”

“Damn it.” Teiran growls out at the guard, mimicking his surprised tone in a strange, strangled squawk. “You go. I will dispose of the body and be right there.”

Yes, sir.” The guard doesn’t hesitate as his thunderous footsteps are heard retreating and suddenly, the cart is moving once

more.

It’s started, the distraction and I can only hope it works and that Merikh is safe at the same time. I know he will be in the midst of the danger. That is the kind of man he is. He never runs from a physical fight. A verbal, emotional one, he

will sprint a marathon away, but this? No, he will be the one out there striking down anyone who comes close until...until he runs out of energy.

I swallow roughly, closing my eyes to calm myself and my wolf. Merikh will be okay, I have to trust that, if I don't then I will find myself paralyzed and unable to think. Everyone will be okay, that I know. I know it just as much as I know who I am

now.

It seems like we move for forever, every single push feeling like a step closer to eternity when all I want to do is break free and call everyone back. Teiran needs to hurry the fuck up or I will have to jump out of this metal tin can and force him to take me out to where the fight is. What will I do? No idea. But I can't sit and do nothing when everyone is sacrificing so

much.

"Teiran," I whisper, rapping on the metal doors.

"Ah!" I hear Teiran say over my noise. "Are you on your way to the surface?"

"Yes, sir. You can leave the body for me to dump after everything is sorted." The warrior says. "Are you sure she is dead?"

"I am positive, and Trey just verified as well. Here is the death tag"

"Leave it there on the desk. You should head up as well..." the warrior says, his voice lilting in a somewhat accusatory tone.

"And leave the healer with her body to do with her what he pleases?" he scoffs. © NôvelDrama.Org – All rights reserved.

"Fair point. The old blob does do strange things," he mutters. "I will toss her when I come back."

After a moment of silence, the doors fling open, and I am ripped out by the collar.

"Are you trying to get us all fucking killed?" he growls in my face, my feet dangling as I glare at him.

“Are you done being a macho dragon, now?” I sass him and his lips twitch in anger.

“The next step is you three going down the chute.” He says, and I watch as the healer’s face grows pale.

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That is disrespectful of the dead, he argues, and Teiranshauge

join them sive or join them when you are dead. Either way, it is where you are going

And where are you poing?” I ask him and he pinches the bride of his

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Teren tosses me over a ledge, my heart hitting the back of my throat as my stomach withs, my Boxy Sailing of anything i can reach. Then I see the healer who looks like he jumps on his own, coming down after me and shorty my mother’s body is gently lowered over the edge.

I land with a grunt, my body feeling like it was driven into the ground by a sledgehammer as the air whooshes from my lungs. The healer lands far too close for comfort as I stand, wheezing to catch my breath and look up, waiting for try mother’s body to move closer before I place my arms out and cushion her fall. My legs and back scream in pain and I ga

The healer makes his way over to me, quickly uncorking another vial from a hidden spot in his shirt. He pours it downs stry mother’s throat and the second it is in her system she jolts up, making me drop her and stumble backward. She scrambles to her knees, heaving as the color returns to her face.

The second her eyes meet mine, I feel tears streaming my cheeks and I rush over to her, pulling her into a hug

“Mom!” I squeeze her tight as she whines.

Top hard, sweetheart,” she croaks, and I pull back.

“Sorry, I’m sorry.” I murmur, wiping my face.

“We need to go Luna,” the healer says, looking around everywhere but under our feet.

The smell hits my nostrils now that the adrenaline is gone and I gag, my hand covering my mouth and nose as my eyes stupidly scan down. Bodies of varying levels of decay stare at me some fresh and others more than a month old. Hair tangles and body parts blend together as I snap my attention up forcing the image from my head.

“Which way?” I ask him.

“Teiran said there is an entrance that way. For when the wolves who live here come to clear out the ash every month.”

“They burn the bodies?” I ask, my heart aching for every loss, deserved or not. This is no way to be laid to rest. No honor. love or family should have to think of their dear ones burning in a mass grave before being swept away for the wind to

scatter.

They are dragons, dear. The healer reminds me. “What other way would you like them disposed of?”

“Do you feel that?” my mother asks, her eyes growing wide as she struggles over bodies to get moving “Something is coming

“Fire?” the healer questions, breaking into the best run he can. We shouldn’t stay to find out.”

I usher my mom after him, taking care to help her along the way. I don’t know what the hell she was given, but she seemn like a whole new person. Only problem is I don’t know how long she has until she is back to being in agonizing pain and incapacitated again.

He makes it to the door first, throwing it open as we come up behind him, only for him to stop abruptly clinging to the frame. There is no stopping him and my mother from falling through as I trip and push into them, sending them

careening over the narrow pathway carved into the rock and down into a dark crevice.

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“No.” I gasp, my heart in my throat as I stare dumbfounded at the black space that consumed my mom and the healer. I whimper and carefully move my way out the door and onto the thin pathway, closing the gateway to the hell behind me.

There are two ways down to them, over the ledge like they went or hoping following this path allows me to find an easier way. It’s the raging fire the booms to my left, far in the distance but close enough that I know exactly who they are aiming for.

There is no time for safety and precautions. If I hope to get us all out of here, it’s going to have to be a controlled descent. I look over the dark edge, my hands shaking as I exhale deeply and drop to my knees before kicking my legs out to my side and hanging them over the edge.

I give myself a moment, reaching out to feel for Merikh, needing the assurance he is okay and I feel him. It’s a glimmer, but it is reassuring to know he is so close. My legs and arms twitch with fearful anticipation as I shake them out and inhale

deeply, before placing my palms on the cool stone path and sliding myself down the side.

The rocks cut into my side, the nicks and slices burning as I hiss and try to slow my near vertical descent by using my hand, attempting to grab onto whatever I can. I gain speed, my heart pumping and my lungs burning as I pant and panic simultaneously. The air grows warmer, staler as it ceases to move and the light from the world above me wanes.

I close my eyes, trying to calm myself as the panic creeps up my throat and my body feels numb. I can feel my wolf stirring, pacing as she begs to be let out and in my state of fear, I let her. She takes over, my body rearranges and a new calm settles over me, my wolf’s senses winning as my paws shove off the mountainside and I leap out, landing on solid ground.

My nose moves to the ground as I sniff, catching the scent of my mother and chasing it a few feet away. I nudge her with my nose, a whine coming from my

chest as I lay down next to her, trying to wake her up. There is a sudden striking sound and I whip my head around to see a small light and the healer's face illuminates.

"Ah, there you are," He says, sounding relieved. "I was worried you had fallen further from us and were severely injured."

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I whimper, resting my snout on my mother's arm as she lays looking unconscious, and he moves over toward us, groaning as he steps over her legs.

"She will be fine," He says, grunting as he drops, placing the small light to the side. I look at it curiously, confused by what exactly it is as I lean forward and sniff at it.

"Ah, little dragon trick. Anything can be burned," He chuckles and reaches out over my mother, pushing something under her nose that makes her startle awake.

"Colette," she says, worried until she looks right at me and her eyes fill with tears and she covers her mouth. "Are you hurt?"

I shake my head no and she touches my snout, sucking in her tears as she nods happily.

"We need to get moving," he says, looking up and then around, his lips pressed tightly together like he is worried.

"What's wrong?" My mom asks, and he stands, helping her up gently.

"Finding a way up won't be easy or fast," He frowns. "It may be best to send you on ahead."

I growl at the thought rising and moving to my mother's side, nuzzling in under her loose, hanging hand. She sighs heavily and shakes her head before she crouches next to me, wrapping her arms around my soft, furred neck.

"He is right. What is most important is you-" she says, but I interrupt her with an agitated yip, and bare my teeth at her. She frowns and shakes her head. "My sweet little Cole. I have missed so much time being your mom and I know I don't deserve this, but I am begging you to go. You could come back with help, or wait for us somewhere else."

She says it like it's a possibility that they will make it out of here, an old hobbling half working dragon healer and a werewolf alpha female who was tortured for ten years. Even I know it's a pipe dream, but then again, I have also learned that even the most off the wall dreams can come true.

Hell, look at me, from orphaned maid to full-blown Luna, queen of our kind and finding out both parents are still alive. If that isn't a fairytale come true, I don't know what is.

I stare at her and look over at the healer, torn between the options. But they are

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right, time is not a luxury we have right now.

Merikh will only last so long against a horde of dragons, Alpha of death or not dragons don't go down easy. And there is not a single doubt in my mind Merikh would fight to his last breath to ensure my freedom. It comes down to risking Merikh or risking my mom and my heart is in agony over my choice.

I drop my head, taking three steps back before I turn and take off. With a newfound determination, I sprint through the rocks, then I try to leap up the steep hill I slide down before. I make it a few feet before slipping, my paws gliding out from under me as I grunt and hit the rock, sliding down on my side.

Shit. I need a way up, but with no light, it's nearly impossible to see where the hell I might be able to move up. Until I see a glinting in the darkness, a spot catching the faintest hint of light, and I gallop toward it, stopping to sniff and find it has no real scent.

My tongue flicks out warily, and I realize it's water. Not enough to make a puddle, but enough to make the rocks wet. My eyes slid shut and I pray I can use my siren's ability to guide myself out, only to find the attempt futile.

When I open my eyes, my vision is clearer, almost like I can sense the water as it moves up the rocks, like finding the source of a waterfall. I trace the drops, listening as it drips over smaller rocks and ledges and trust my instincts to get me where I am going. I take a leap of faith, jumping up only to freeze as the rock creaks and smaller stones tumble beneath me.

After taking a sharp inhale and steadying my frightened muscles, I leap to the left, my hind legs slipping as I whine, my underbelly slamming into the slate like rock that cuts into my stomach. Warmth drips down my belly and I struggle to get my leg up, my tongue hanging out as I pant with the effort. © NôvelDrama.Org – All rights reserved.

The water seems to grow more steady the higher I crawl. From an inconsistent drip to a small trickle down over the ledge as I grow closer to the light, the sun is just a few more steps above me when I hear rushing. I furrow my wolf's brows in concentration trying to listen, the sound of running water overwhelmingly loud as I cover my face and ears to stop the pain from the roaring.

Then it hits me, a wall of wet hammers into my body before it comes fast enough it behind to overshoot my body, dropping into the cannon like a faucet has been turned on high in a tub. I panic, looking for a way up before looking back where I ran from, watching the dim light where my mom and the healer are, hopefully,

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making headway before the light goes out

The soft scream of shock and yelling echoes over the sound of the water and my ear ticks back, trying to listen better before I bound off the ledge, into the

flowing water letting it take hold of my body as it wipes me from the air and pulls me into its wet embrace. Instead of it being a ravaging wave, it feels oddly calm and settling.

I plunge into the growing pool at the bottom of the ridge, my body tumbling with the waves and current as I rush back the way I just came. Everything tingles, my paws, my fur, and especially my soul.

Water has always felt safe, like home, but nothing has felt as wonderful as this. To be in my wolf's form, in the water, it feels like I am being embraced in a warm welcoming hug and I don't ever want to leave it.

"Hold on to me, Calvin," I hear my mom screaming as the healer grunts with effort.

The current is too strong. You need to let go, Melody."

"No." She cries. "You saved my daughter. That's what got you into this mess. I refuse to let you go, not now."

My body tingles with renewed purpose as I duck into the water, swimming toward them in my wolf form. With every kick, I feel the water wrap around me, making way for me to move faster, the current working with me rather than against.

I pop up to search for them and see I over shot them by mere feet, spinning toward them, again the current dying around me as I move toward them with ease. My mom's eyes light up when she sees me, fear turning to confusion as she tilts her head and the healer lets go. He doesn't move, instead he floats in place, looking around with awe and shock before he sees me and he stares.

My body shakes and I close my eyes, feeling the water, calling it to my command like I have in the past, only this time I realize how much I am asking of it, willing to give back to it every speck of energy it gives me.

It responds, my eyes snapping open and my human body back in place as the water rises, bringing with it the three of us as we grow taller, moving closer to the top.

"Colette," my mother whispers, but I can't break the concentration as my body is

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leaching of energy. Every fiber in my body quivers with exhaustion, my wolf standing tall in my mind, giving me everything she has to help keep me conscious as I drain my source.

We shoot from the crevice, my body going limp as we splash along the ground on the other side, my body slamming hard into the rock as the water retreats down, leaving us soaked and heaving for air.

“That was-” My mother says, stopping to think of a word.

“Exhausting?” I offer, coughing and unable to push myself up as my arms and legs crumble under me after the first attempt.

“Phenomenal.” The healer says instead.

“How did you do that?” My mom whispers, crawling over to me as she tries to tug me into her arms. My eyes droop, the immense amount of effort to do what I just did weighs too heavy as I fight sleep.

just...did.” I whisper, my eyes closing.

“Colette, your wolf was made of water,” she tells me, but I am too tired to confirm or deny what she claims. Instead, I shrug.

“Cool,” I murmur.

“Luna!” I hear someone scream and I peek through my heavy lids to see what looks like Merikh rushing toward me. I find the energy to smile, reaching out for him, happily. He is safe, and we are saved.

“Who are you?” My mother demands, standing abruptly to protect me.

“Calm down, my name is Hayes. I am her beta and she is mated to my brother, the alpha.”

“Mel...” I hear another familiar voice whisper in disbelief before a soft s b breaks

out.

“Caspian?” I hear my mother say before I can no longer hang on and I let the comfort of sleep take hold of me.

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*Merikh

A burst of flame shoots over my head as I drop to my stomach, the heat enough to make my skin feel as if I am standing too close to a bonfire. I roll to my left and up onto my knees, crouching low toward the massive jaded rock where Percy is hiding. Blood pours from above his right eye, but he wears a smile, nonetheless.

Not an excited smile, a manic psychotic one that says he hopes to go out in a literal blaze of glory. His fighting has been stellar aside from the few times he has left himself open to an attack of two I have had to blunder. The more I look at him, the more concerned I am that the openings are intentional.

“You are not allowed to let yourself get killed.” I growl at him, watching as he responds to my command. There is a hint of annoyance in his eyes before he chuckles and nods.

“If I die, I will die doing my job.” he grins, inching up the rock to take a peek over.

“We are pinned down.” I murmur. “The assholes burned us into a fucking corner.”

“I can distract them so you can run.” Percy says immediately, and I shoot him a scowl. This kid’s death wish is getting a little out of hand.

“Pinned down doesn’t mean we are out of the fight, Perc. This isn’t a game of chess, this is war.” I say, scanning the area. “It just means we need to get a little creative.”

He snorts, reaching up and pressing on the injury to his head.

“I’m not feeling all that creative, Alpha.” He says.

Another blast encases the outside of the rock, flames licking around the side as we move closer together to avoid the heat. I sigh, closing my eyes as I try

to process what to do next. In truth, I'm not feeling all that damn creative either. But I am feeling like I will do anything to get away.

"How about desperate?" I ask him with a smile, "You feeling that?" and he nods.

"Yea, feeling a lot desperate at the moment" Percy mutters, dropping his head against the rock. "This heat is making me fucking sweaty and irritable."

I couldn't agree more with him. As lycans, we run a little warmer anyway without

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faster metabolism. But this? This shit is unbearable and all I can think about is a tall glass of ice cold water and a cool dip in the healing waters with my luna. But if I want either of those things, we need to get a damn move on. And fast.

"How much time do we have between the bursts of flames?" I ask him.

We noticed before they need time to recover before they rain their fire down on us for extended periods of time. The only thing we have going for us is that they want to cook us on this blasted boulder so they are combining their forces to blow flames at the same time.

"Maybe a minute, tops." He mutters, "Have you not heard from Luna Letty yet? Is she out?"

I shake my head, licking my parched lips in frustration. It has been a solid fucking forty-five minutes of fighting. We lost our lycans over ten minutes ago from the exhaustion and the way we are dehydrated like a bunch of grapes in the desert sun.

"She isn't reaching out or responding." I mutter, my stomach in knots at the thought that maybe she didn't make it out, or she was knocked unconscious and hidden deeper in their fortress of ash and death.

"We can't leave her." Percy says, a look of determination on his brow.

“Not a thing in the world that could make me leave her here in this living hell, Perc. But we may need to escape and regroup. We aren’t any good to her if we are dead.”

Just then, the fire ceases and I make the split decision to grab his arm and run. I bolt up, yanking on Percy as I drag him along, tripping over the hot terrain in our bare feet. I can feel the way the hot rocks dip into my skin with ease,

skin with ease, like butter on a hot skillet and it spurs faster movement.

“Move

mine.

your ass, Percy.” I command and he groans, kicking up his speed to match

“I will never want to be in heat ever again,” he scoffs. “No more beach vacation, I’m going to the swiss alps to ski every year now.”

As we run, I can hear the hiss of the air, the dragons preparing themselves to set us on fire like a match struck on a rock and I glance back to see them lumbering behind us. I can only be thankful none of the assholes we have encountered today have been able to fly.

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“Percy, I demand you shift and run as fast and as far as you can.” I say in my alpha command voice. He lycan takes over at once, looking labored and exhausted as he tries to fight my command to run. “Now!” roar.

He hisses angrily before taking off at an incredible pace as I force my lycan out, begging him for everything he has. He takes over, reluctantly, as I see someone off in distance now more than a few miles across the barren charred rumble we are racing over.

I focus on them, recognizing Caspian as he lifts a hand, then I see her frame. It has to be here. My lycan pushes himself harder once we focus on her. She stumbles to the ground and I see two figures rush to her and try to lift her as she shoves them off.

“RUN!” I hear her voice through the dry air, a shiver running down my spine at the desperation of her plea.

Percy falls to the ground in front of me, his human form taking over as he grunts and remains unmoving. I stoop to pick him up, looking over my shoulder, begging the moon goddess for just a little more time. But there is no stopping what is already predetermined sometimes as the flames come hurling my way.

I fall on top of Percy, shielding his body as the hairs on my lycan back burn in the heat and my skin feels like it may melt. I cry out in pain, a roar unlike any I have ever let out as the heat suddenly stops. The screaming continues and I look around, realizing the cry isn't mine, but someone in the distance.

Cool water splashes over me as I gasp in relief and close my eyes, relishing the way it feels on my heated flesh. Tears may mix into the wetness pouring down as I try to catch what I can with my open mouth.

Two figures sprint toward us, and I push off of Percy, standing to look around. The dragons rush forward, their flames drenched and unable to ignite again. I sprint through the wall of water, grabbing a slim, sharp rock. The dragon nearest me rears its head up before baring his teeth at me as he tries to catch my head.

I slide beneath him, the searing rocks tearing the skin from my shins as I jam the rock up and under one of his scales. It squelches, and he roars, shifting back into human form, holding the rock under his arm as blood pours down. He sneers at me, taking three steps away, the other dragons stopping and waiting for command. Then, as if they hadn't been trying to kill us, they turn, shift and spin on their heels, running away. I watch as the one with the rock embedded in his arm goes

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slack, his eyes red as he drops his hand and spins like the others, sprinting back as if he had been beckoned by their puppet master.

“Merikh!” I hear Hayes screaming as he rushes toward me. Leandra is heading toward Percy, and I look up to see someone on the ground and everyone else surrounding them. I hustle toward him, meeting him halfway while never removing my eyes from the figure on the ground.

“Is that...” I choke on the words.

“Yes.”..

“And she is okay?” I ask, looking at him as he grows pale.

“She will be,” he says, handing me a pair of shorts and shoes. I slip both on, gritting my teeth at the pain.

“Percy is drained.” I tell him. “He will need to be carried.”

“And what about you?” He asks me seriously. I shake

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“No, I don’t need carrying.” I smirk. “I will carry Colette.”

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It takes longer than I would like to make it to where they are surrounding Colette, who lays looking like a dirt smeared angel. I kneel, not paying attention to the way my body screams at every action, and I press my lips to her forehead and stroke her cheek.

“Oh, my little Luna.” I murmur, taking in her injured and malnourished body. “What did they do to you?”

“We need to get moving if we want to get to our pack quickly,” Hayes says, and I shake my head, looking up at Caspian, who wears a worried look on his face.

“We aren’t going back to the pack.” I say softly, brushing her sweaty hair from her brow.

“Alpha, is that wise? The mansion is likely not the safest place.” Hayes says.

“She heals faster in water.” I remind him, “And she will probably heal faster in the ocean where her siren half will thrive, so that is where we will go. You will take Percy and Leandra to the pack. I will go with Caspian and Colette.”

“War is coming-”

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“War is already fucking here, Hayes.” I yell at him. “Look the fuck around. They stole the fucking Lycan Queen!”

He looks away, clenching his jaw in frustration as I sigh.

“Hayes, I need you to take the pack to our secondary location. We will meet you there in a week. If Colette is not healthy enough by then, well then I will come alone.”

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