

The Dragons

I haven't been able to wrap my head around Richard's revelation. But I don't really have time to do so either, because Des has decided that it's time for a first dragon mating soon. Now he's about to explain the process.

"In the ancient past, when there were other beings who could bear a dragon's offspring, it was the ritual that the oldest dragon of the horde would mate because he would be the strongest and therefore most successful. But times have changed, we don't need these old rules anymore. So, as I initially suggested, I would like to leave it up to Cat to decide," he explains and I swallow hard.

"Why exactly does it have to be a dragon now? I thought I could choose the species," I say under my breath.

"That is true, I did say that. But I want to make sure that your body has the least amount of stress. Although you don't *feel* pain doesn't mean that your body doesn't go through immense changes. Since the first offspring you have ever brought to life were dragons, they are like...balm for your shifter body. So, to decrease the possibility of any problems for your physique, I would suggest to mate a dragon between each other species."

"Okay, if you say so," I respond and Des smiles.

"You don't need to mate them *all*, you realize that, right? You don't need to have offspring each time."

"But isn't that unfair? It means that not all will have children."

"That's life, I guess." Des shrugs. Hmm. I'm not too happy about that. But then again... I will never have children myself either.

This realization makes me incredibly sad all of a sudden. I try to hide it by faking a smile all the time, but I can't really follow the conversation from here on. They just discuss who should be first in their eyes anyways.

When I'm alone again, I can't help but wonder...do I want children of my own? Is that even still possible? And if so, would it have to be a human? That would be the most boring sex ever if a human can't satisfy me anymore. But apart from that, which human would I even want to be the father of my children?

"You seem down." Jovi sits down next to me and I nod, leaning against his shoulder, he wraps his arm around me. "What's bothering you?"

"I don't think I can mate Ruis and you," I whisper and he chuckles.

"I gurgled as much. That's okay, Ruis knows this as well. We value our friendship and if that's the price we have to pay for it, we're fine with it."

"But that's unfair!" I sit up and look at him angrily. "You're wonderful and your children would be equally wonderful."

"That's just how it is, Cat."

"But it sucks." I pout and Jovi smirks. "Maybe we should just do it, in out and done. It might be weird, but still."

"That's not how it's supposed to be. As long as there's no other you, we'll stay offspring-less, and that's okay, really." Jovi strokes my head, but I frown. Another me?

"Is cloning a thing?" I ask, and he looks puzzled before he starts laughing. "I mean, can Richard do that? Being a godlike creature and all that?"

"Don't let him hear that. I don't think he'd do that anyway, his time of messing with humans is long over."

"It still sucks." I sigh deeply. "Ruis is the oldest, so it should be him who goes first. But he's like a brother, that's just wrong. And now everybody expects me to choose Lima, but..."

"Do you not want to mate him?" Jovi asks and I shrug.

"I'm not sure. He fooled me, made me feel bad for lying to Des, but at the same time..." I feel my cheeks turn red, so Jovi laughs.

"He turns you on, huh?"

"Yeah."

"Nobody expects anything from you, really. Even if you never mate any of us, that's perfectly fine."

"I don't know." I sigh again and snuggle up to Jovi.

"Don't worry. It will all be okay with time."

After two days of thinking about this situation, I have a quite specific idea. And to be able to find out whether it may work or not, I need Des.

I find him talking to the werewolves, which is funny to watch. Des speaks a weird language and I don't understand a word, but they seem to, wagging their huge tails and all that. When he's done, he turns around, smiles at me, and takes my hand to lead me out of the dark forest.

"What can I help you with?" he asks, and I think about how I phrase what I want to say.

"I was wondering... You said that with the magic brew of Salazar, the offspring are more mine and his, rather than the monster's who's giving me the seed, right?" I ask, and Des chuckles, nodding.

"Not exactly yours, but somehow, yes."

"So..." I stop walking and take his hands. "If I ask Salazar to make one for you, then you sleep with me... could it be our child?"

Des furrows his brow and tilts his head.

"I cannot give you a human baby, Cat," he says with a sad undertone. "As much as this is breaking my heart, I am not able to do such a thing."

"I'm not asking you to." I shake my head vividly. "I'm asking you to make me a shifter-dragon mix."

Now, Des looks puzzled.

"That...why? I'm not even sure if this is possible."

"We could try. I cannot mate with Ruis and Jovi, it just feels wrong, but at the same time I don't want them to stay without offspring their whole lives. So instead, I was thinking...what about securing the next generation of shapeshifters? And with them not having your DNA due to the brew thing, isn't that a plan? They wouldn't have to go through all the trouble of stretching and preparation, but could be groomed into loving monsters and if they choose to, breeding them. They would be our children, but also the saviors of all the species' survival, besides myself."

"That...is a very interesting idea. I have to think about this," Des says and starts walking again. He's deep in his thoughts, which means that he won't be talking for a while. I like watching him doing that, though, so I don't dislike the silence.

But when we reach our little home, the other dragons are sitting around. They are expecting me to make a decision any day now.

"Leave," Des just says with a wave of his hand and they all get up and hurry away, their heads pulled down a little. But Lima gives me a second glance, a question in his eyes, but I pretend not to notice.

"Are you angry?" I ask, so Des swirls around and shakes his head.

"No, of course not! But I can't handle the boys now when they are full of testosterone and trying to impress you. I think...maybe this idea isn't so bad. It might even work. I'll have to discuss it with Richard, though. You should think about which dragon you want to mate with first, for now. It will take time until you'll do it anyways, so you might as well make up your mind already."

"I see. Is it the same like it was with you? Their dragon form and impregnation with the first sex?" I ask, but Des chuckles and shakes his head.

"No. They can do it in whatever form you or they prefer, and it doesn't have to be successful with one time, because you won't use Salazar's brew. That was only the case with us because we love each other."

Des takes my hand. "A true dragon soulmate will impregnate the first time. But I didn't want to take any chances and do it as a dragon, as that increases the likeliness for it to happen."

"About that..." I remember the picture Richard put into my head. "There's something I want to try with you soon..."

"I like that undertone." Des grins and pulls me closer by the hip. "Whatever it is... I'm all yours."

"I'd prefer to be yours," I whisper and kiss him gently.