

The King's Tainted Mate Chapter 7 - Tips

"What's happening to me, Gol?" I hunched over grabbing my middle in a futile attempt to keep the searing pain at bay. Wave after wave of pain pounded my insides, taking my breath away. I felt like I was going to die, or burn or shatter into a thousand pieces all at the same time. Some moments felt as though I was being crushed from the inside out. And why wasn't he carrying me inside? The sun and everything out here was making everything worse. The light was too much for my eyes, the heat from the sun even though it was still morning was burning my skin, and all those sounds coming from everywhere were driving me insane. "Gol!" I cried out, hands shifting to my head. I could feel it splitting in two, leaving me breathless and barely hanging on to life.

"Let go Shyla." Gol kept saying that and it infuriated me. How could I when the pain was eating me alive?

"I'm dying, Gol." I whimpered. It was all too much. Worse than any kind of pain I'd felt before. My legs buckled and I crashed to the ground, my body writhing in pain.

"You are not dying." His voice was calm, but it did nothing for me. If anything, it only fed the fear brewing inside of me. No matter how much he said it, I still remained convinced that I was about to meet my end. My sad end, to my lonely life. "You are merely getting your wolf."

Wolf? What wolf?

"You are shifting."

I laughed at his answer. Despite all the pain I felt, I laughed. That had to be the most ludicrous explanation to my predicament Gol could ever give me. Although, I could forgive him for it because he knew little to nothing about me. And the topic about birthdays and family had certainly never come up in any of our conversations so he wouldn't really know when I was due to shift.

"My birthday is but many months away. I can't be getting my wolf." I growled an explanation.

"But you are." His serious expression conveyed his belief. I was about to argue. To point out that that was just not possible when a painful growl escaped my lips. Someone or something was ripping me apart. She was ripping me apart.

In my mind's eye, the most beautiful creature appeared, their silver eyes boring into mine demanding to be set free.

It was then that I really believed Gol. I was indeed shifting. But instead of joy, my belief came with the burning reminder that I was all alone. The realization brought with it a wave of panic and a new set of fears. I couldn't do it. I couldn't shift. Not without them.

"I can't." I cried out just as my wolf's demand to be set free showered me with immense pain.

"Of course you can." That annoyingly calm voice urged me and I growled at him.

Didn't he know? What it meant for a wolf to come of age without her family to help walk the path? Without their blood to bond her to them and make her whole? I knew it. It had haunted my every waking day ever since they abandoned me. The sight of the rising sun each morning spoke of the inevitable as my birthday drew ever so near. I had found comfort in the knowledge that I still had time before walking that road, but now it was here. Without so much as a warning. My life as I knew it was about to change and not for the better.

If I welcomed my wolf I would forever be a poor lonely soul with a gaping hole in my heart that would forever be my source of sadness. A sadness that would drive me to commit the worst of atrocities just to numb it. My mate would be my saving grace. Our mate bond would mend that gaping hole, but with my being rejected already, solitude remained my fate. The mere thought brought a heavy ache in my soul.

"I can't do it without them Gol." Was it even possible to keep myself from shifting?

"I'm here." Gol offered me his hand, eyes sparkling with something I had never seen in there before. Something warm and reassuring. He cared for me, more than I thought. His gentle expression wormed its way to that ache in my soul and soothed it. I was not certain it would be enough. Whether what had come to be between us would suffice, but I took his hand anyway. It was already bleeding. For me, he bled, spurring me to risk everything too.

"Let go, Shyla." I held Gol's gaze as I gave in. His hand tightened on mine while his claws sunk in, drawing blood. This was as intimate as family went.

Me and Gol would forever be bonded no matter what happened in our futures or after I shifted.

My wolf was waiting. As soon as I stopped fighting and gave in to its demands, my body was not my own anymore. I should have been mesmerized by it all, but everything was overshadowed by intense pain as every bit of who I was began changing into the other perfect part of myself. Bones painfully rearranged themselves in an unfathomable fashion, taking away my human form and leaving only the beast. I could feel my bare skin being covered with something thick, effectively shielding me from the harsh sun. I groaned when my delicate hands painfully took on the form of paws. Gritted my teeth when every part of me aligned with my new form and by the time everything stopped, my heart still beat like drums in my chest. Or perhaps that was just my perfect wolf hearing.

“Magnificent isn’t it?” Gol had a smirk on his face and I agreed with him. Being in my wolf form was magnificent, awe inspiring and everything beautiful I could think of. The pain was certainly worth it, every bit of it.

My vision was a thousand times sharper, allowing me to see far and wide. My hearing...I shut my eyes and let myself see with my ears as I picked up the tiniest of sounds. Until now, I had never realized all there was to hear in the woods that surrounded me. But perhaps the best part of it all was that I still remained me. The fears that had plagued me had not come to be. I felt fine, no hint of loneliness I could spot. If anything I felt whole, more than I had ever felt in my life.

I knew it was thanks to Gol, so I turned to him, to appreciate all he’d done for me, but all I found where a pair of his hind legs fading from my view. He’d taken advantage of my being distracted and shifted.

“Show me what you possess, little wolf?” He dared me, his challenge all so clear in my mind. We ran after him without a second thought. Not even caring that he’d referred to me as a little wolf. I quickly learned that in that regard, I and my wolf were different. An insatiable need drove my wolf to beat Gol at everything. Standing up to every challenge he presented us and basking in intense pride at his note of approval. He’d leap over branches and she’d easily match his leaps effortlessly until she couldn’t.

It wasn’t an impossible jump, but we came crashing right back down moments after making the leap.

My wolf whimpered before we even hit the ground. We'd been struck, right in the heart. And as the pain spread, so did the heaviest wave of sadness. Perhaps I had spoken too soon. Perhaps what me and Gol shared was not enough after all.